A TREASURY OF BALLADS

EDGAR

A Treasury of Ballads

And Story Poems

Selected by

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San Stefano

A Ballad of the Bold "Menelaus"

IT was morning at St Helen's, in the great and gallant days,
And the sea beneath the sun glittered wide,
When the frigate set her courses, all a-shimmer in the haze,
And she hauled her cable home and took the tide.
She'd a right fighting company, three hundred men and more,
Nine and forty guns in tackle running free;
And they cheered her from the shore for her colours at the fore,
When the bold *Menelaus* put to sea.

She'd a right fighting company, three hundred men and more,
Nine and forty guns in tackle running free;
And they cheered her from the shore for her colours at the fore,
When the bold Menelaus *put to sea.*

She was clear of Monte Cristo, she was heading for the land,
When she spied a pennant red and white and blue;

They were foemen, and they knew it, and they'd
half a league in hand,
But she flung aloft her royals, and she flew.
She was nearer, nearer, nearer, they were caught
beyond a doubt,
But they slipped her, into Orbetello Bay,
And the lubbers gave a shout as they paid their
cables out,
With the guns grinning round them where they
lay.

Now Sir Peter was a captain of a famous fighting
race,
Son and grandson of an admiral was he;
And he looked upon the batteries, he looked upon
the chase,
And he heard the shout that echoed out to
sea.
And he called across the decks, "Ay! the cheering
might be late
If they kept it till the *Menelaus* runs;
Bid the master and his mate heave the lead and
lay her straight
For the prize lying yonder by the guns."

When the summer moon was setting, into Orbetello
Bay
Came the *Menelaus* gliding like a ghost;
And her boats were manned in silence, and in
silence pulled away,
And in silence every gunner took his post.

With a volley from her broadside the citadel she woke,
And they hammered back like heroes all the night;
But before the morning broke she had vanished through the smoke
With her prize upon her quarter grappled tight.

It was evening at St Helen's, in the great and gallant time,
And the sky behind the down was flushing far;
And the flags were all a-flutter, and the bells were all a-chime,
When the frigate cast her anchor off the bar.
She'd a right fighting company, three hundred men and more,
Nine and forty guns in tackle running free;
And they cheered her from the shore for her colours at the fore,
When the bold *Menelaus* came from sea.

She'd a right fighting company, three hundred men and more,
Nine and forty guns in tackle running free;
And they cheered her from the shore for her colours at the fore,
When the bold Menelaus *came from sea.*

HENRY NEWBOLT

The Ballad of East and West

OH, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet,
Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's great Judgment Seat;
But there is neither East nor West, Border, nor Breed, nor Birth,
When two strong men stand face to face, though they come from the ends of the earth!

Kamal is out with twenty men to raise the Border-side,
And he has lifted the Colonel's mare that is the Colonel's pride:
He has lifted her out of the stable-door between the dawn and the day,
And turned the calkins upon her feet, and ridden her far away.

Then up and spoke the Colonel's son that led a troop of the Guides:
"Is there never a man of all my men can say where Kamal hides?"
Then up and spoke Mahommed Khan, the son of the Ressaldar:
"If ye know the track of the morning-mist, ye know where his pickets are.
At dusk he harries the Abazai—at dawn he is into Bonair,
But he must go by Fort Bukloh to his own place to fare,
So if ye gallop to Fort Bukloh as fast as a bird can fly,
By the favour of God ye may cut him off ere he win to the Tongue of Jagai.

But if he be past the Tongue of Jagai, right swiftly turn ye then,
For the length and the breadth of that grisly plain is sown with Kamal's men.
There is rock to the left, and rock to the right, and low lean thorn between,
And ye may hear a breech-bolt snick where never a man is seen."

The Colonel's son has taken a horse and a raw, rough dun was he,
With the mouth of a bell and the heart of Hell and the head of the gallows-tree.
The Colonel's son to the Fort has won, they bid him stay to eat—
Who rides at the tail of a Border thief, he sits not long at his meat.
He's up and away from Fort Bukloh as fast as he can fly,
Till he was aware of his father's mare in the gut of the Tongue of Jagai,
Till he was aware of his father's mare with Kamal upon her back,
And when he could spy the white of her eye, he made the pistol crack.
He has fired once, he has fired twice, but the whistling ball went wide.
"Ye shoot like a soldier," Kamal said. "Show now if ye can ride."

It's up and over the Tongue of Jagai, as blown dust-devils go,
The dun he fled like a stag of ten, but the mare like a barren doe.

The dun he leaned against the bit and slugged his head above,
But the red mare played with the snaffle-bars, as a maiden plays with a glove.
There was rock to the left and rock to the right, and low lean thorn between,
And thrice he heard a breech-bolt snick though never a man was seen.
They have ridden the low moon out of the sky, their hoofs drum up the dawn,
The dun he went like a wounded bull, but the mare like a new-roused fawn.
The dun he fell at a water-course—in a woful heap fell he,
And Kamal has turned the red mare back, and pulled the rider free.
He has knocked the pistol out of his hand—small room was there to strive,
"'Twas only by favour of mine," quoth he, "ye rode so long alive:
There was not a rock for twenty mile, there was not a clump of tree,
But covered a man of my own men with his rifle cocked on his knee.
If I had raised my bridle-hand, as I have held it low,
The little jackals that flee so fast were feasting all in a row;
If I had bowed my head on my breast, as I have held it high,
The kite that whistles above us now were gorged till she could not fly."

Lightly answered the Colonel's son: "Do good to bird and beast,

But count who come for the broken meats before thou makest a feast.
If there should follow a thousand swords to carry my bones away,
Belike the price of a jackal's meal were more than a thief could pay.
They will feed their horse on the standing crop, their men on the garnered grain,
The thatch of the byres will serve their fires when all the cattle are slain.
But if thou thinkest the price be fair,—thy brethren wait to sup,
The hound is kin to the jackal-spawn,—howl, dog, and call them up!
And if thou thinkest the price be high, in steer and gear and stack,
Give me my father's mare again, and I'll fight my own way back!"

Kamal has gripped him by the hand and set him upon his feet.
"No talk shall be of dogs," said he, "when wolf and grey wolf meet.
May I eat dirt if thou hast hurt of me in deed or breath;
What dam of lances brought thee forth to jest at the dawn with Death?"
Lightly answered the Colonel's son: "I hold by the blood of my clan:
Take up the mare for my father's gift—by God she has carried a man!"
The red mare ran to the Colonel's son, and nuzzled against his breast;

"We be two strong men," said Kamal then, "but she loveth the younger best.
So she shall go with a lifter's dower, my turquoise-studded rein,
My broidered saddle and saddle-cloth, and silver stirrups twain."

The Colonel's son a pistol drew and held it muzzle-end,
"Ye have taken the one from a foe," said he; "will ye take the mate from a friend?"
"A gift for a gift," said Kamal straight; "a limb for the risk of a limb.
Thy father has sent his son to me, I'll send my son to him!"
With that he whistled his only son, that dropped from a mountain-crest—
He trod the ling like a buck in spring, and he looked like a lance in rest.
"Now here is thy master," Kamal said, "who leads a troop of the Guides,
And thou must ride at his left side as shield on shoulder rides.
Till Death or I cut loose the tie, at camp and board and bed,
Thy life is his—thy fate it is to guard him with thy head.
So, thou must eat the White Queen's meat, and all her foes are thine,
And thou must harry thy father's hold for the peace of the Border-line,
And thou must make a trooper tough and hack thy way to power—

Belike they will raise thee to Ressaldar when I am hanged in Peshawur."

They have looked each other between the eyes, and there they found no fault,
They have taken the Oath of the Brother-in-Blood on leavened bread and salt;
They have taken the Oath of the Brother-in-Blood on fire and fresh-cut sod,
On the hilt and the haft of the Khyber knife, and the Wondrous Names of God.
The Colonel's son he rides the mare and Kamal's boy the dun,
And two have come back to Fort Bukloh where there went forth but one.
And when they drew to the Quarter-Guard, full twenty swords flew clear—
There was not a man but carried his feud with the blood of the mountaineer.
"Ha' done! ha' done!" said the Colonel's son. "Put up the steel at your sides!
Last night ye had struck at a Border thief—to-night 'tis a man of the Guides!"

Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet,
Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's great Judgment Seat;
But there is neither East nor West, Border, nor Breed, nor Birth,
When two strong men stand face to face, though they come from the ends of the earth!

RUDYARD KIPLING

The Red Thread of Honour

Told to the Author by Sir Charles Napier

ELEVEN men of England
A breastwork charged in vain;
Eleven men of England
Lie stripped, and gashed, and slain
Slain; but of foes that guarded
Their rock-built fortress well,
Some twenty had been mastered,
When the last soldier fell.

Whilst Napier piloted his wondrous way
Across the sand-waves of the desert sea,
Then flashed at once, on each fierce clan, dismay,
Lord of their wild Truckee.
These missed the glen to which their steps were bent,
Mistook a mandate, from afar half heard,
And, in that glorious error, calmly went
To death without a word.

The robber-chief mused deeply
Above those daring dead;
"Bring here," at length he shouted,
"Bring quick, the battle thread.
Let Eblis blast for ever
Their souls, if Allah will:
But WE must keep unbroken
The old rules of the Hill.

"Before the Ghiznee tiger
Leapt forth to burn and slay;
Before the holy Prophet
Taught our grim tribes to pray;

Before Secunder's lances
Pierced through each Indian glen;
The mountain laws of honour
Were framed for fearless men.

Still, when a chief dies bravely,
We bind with green *one* wrist—
Green for the brave, for heroes,
ONE crimson thread we twist.
Say ye, O gallant Hillmen,
For these, whose life has fled,
Which is the fitting colour,
The green one, or the red?"

"Our brethren, laid in honoured graves, may wear
Their green reward," each noble savage said;
"To these, whom hawks and hungry wolves shall tear,
Who dares deny the red?"
Thus conquering hate, and steadfast to the right,
Fresh from the heart that haughty verdict came;
Beneath a waning moon, each spectral height
Rolled back its loud acclaim.

Once more the chief gazed keenly
Down on those daring dead;
From his good sword their heart's blood
Crept to that crimson thread.
Once more he cried, "The judgment,
Good friends, is wise and true,
But though the red *be* given,
Have we not more to do?

"These were not stirred by anger,
Nor yet by lust made bold;
Renown they thought above them,
Nor did they look for gold.
To them their leader's signal
Was as the voice of God:
Unmoved, and uncomplaining,
The path it showed they trod.

"As, without sound or struggle,
The stars unhurrying march,
Where Allah's finger guides them,
Through yonder purple arch,
These Franks, sublimely silent,
Without a quickened breath,
Went, in the strength of duty,
Straight to their goal of death.

"If I were now to ask you
To name our bravest man,
Ye all at once would answer,
They called him Mehrab Khan.
He sleeps among his fathers,
Dear to our native land,
With the bright mark he bled for
Firm round his faithful hand.

"The songs they sing of Rustum
Fill all the past with light;
If truth be in their music,
He was a noble knight.
But were those heroes living
And strong for battle still,
Would Mehrab Khan or Rustum
Have climbed, like these, the Hill?"

And they replied, "Though Mehrab Khan was
brave,
As chief, he chose himself what risks to run;
Prince Rustum lied, his forfeit life to save,
Which these had never done."

"Enough!" he shouted fiercely;
"Doomed though they be to hell,
Bind fast the crimson trophy
Round BOTH wrists—bind it well.
Who knows but that great Allah
May grudge such matchless men,
With none so decked in heaven,
To the fiends' flaming den?"

Then all those gallant robbers
Shouted a stern "Amen!"
They raised the slaughtered sergeant,
They raised his mangled ten.
And when we found their bodies
Left bleaching in the wind,
Around BOTH wrists in glory
That crimson thread was twined.

Then Napier's knightly heart, touched to the core,
Rung, like an echo, to that knightly deed,
He bade its memory live for evermore,
That those who run may read.

SIR FRANCIS H. DOYLE

The Loss of the "Birkenhead"

The troopship Birkenhead *struck on a rock off Simon's Bay, Cape Colony, February* 26, 1852.

RIGHT on our flank the crimson sun went down,
The deep sea rolled around in dark repose,
When, like the wild shriek from some captured town,
A cry of women rose.

The stout ship *Birkenhead* lay hard and fast,
Caught, without hope, upon a hidden rock;
Her timbers thrilled as nerves, when through them passed
The spirit of that shock.

And ever like base cowards, who leave their ranks
In danger's hour, before the rush of steel,
Drifted away, disorderly, the planks
From underneath her keel.

Confusion spread, for, though the coast seemed near,
Sharks hovered thick along that white sea-brink.
The boats could hold?—not all—and it was clear
She was about to sink.

"Out with those boats, and let us haste away,"
Cried one, "ere yet yon sea the bark devours."
The man thus clamouring was, I scarce need say,
No officer of ours.

We knew our duty better than to care
For such loose babblers, and made no reply,
Till our good colonel gave the word, and there
Formed us in line to die.

There rose no murmur from the ranks, no thought,
By shameful strength, unhonoured life to seek;
Our post to quit we were not trained, nor taught
To trample down the weak.

So we made women with their children go,
The oars ply back again, and yet again;
Whilst, inch by inch, the drowning ship sank low,
Still under steadfast men.

What follows why recall? The brave who died
Died without flinching in the bloody surf;
They sleep as well, beneath that purple tide,
As others, under turf:—

They sleep as well, and, roused from their wild grave,
Wearing their wounds like stars, shall rise again,
Joint heirs with Christ, because they bled to save
His weak ones, not in vain.

If that day's work no clasp or medal mark,
If each proud heart no cross of bronze may press,
Nor cannon thunder loud from Tower and Park,
This feel we, none the less:

That those whom God's high grace there saved from ill—
Those also, left His martyrs in the bay—
Though not by siege, though not in battle, still
Full well had earned their pay.

SIR FRANCIS H. DOYLE

The Home-Coming of the "Eurydice"

The training-ship Eurydice *was lost with her crew of three hundred boys, on the last day of her voyage, March* 24, 1878. *She foundered off Ventnor, within sight of Portsmouth, from which town many of the boys came.*

UP with the royals that top the white spread of her!
Press her and dress her, and drive through the foam;
The Island's to port, and the mainland ahead of her,
Hey for the Warner and Hayling and Home!

"Bo'sun, O Bo'sun, just look at the green of it!
Look at the red cattle down by the hedge!
Look at the farm steading—all that is seen of it,
One little gable end over the edge!"

"Lord! the tongues of them, clattering, clattering,
All growing wild at a peep of the Wight;
Aye, sir, aye, it has set them all chattering,
Thinking of home and their mothers to-night."

Spread the top gallants—oh, lay them out lustily
What though it darken o'er Netherby Combe?
'Tis but the valley-wind, puffing so gustily—
On for the Warner and Hayling and Home!

"Bo'sun, O Bo'sun, just see the long slope of it!
Culver is there, with the cliff and the light.
Tell us, oh tell us, now is there a hope of it?
Shall we have leave for our homes for to-night?

The Home-Coming of the "Eurydice"

"Tut, the clack of them! Steadily! Steadily!
Aye, as you say, sir, they're little ones still;
One long reach should open it readily,
Round by St Helen's and under the hill.

"The Spit and the Nab are the gates of the promise,
Their mothers to them—and to us it's our wives.
I've sailed forty years, and—My God, it's upon us!
Down royals, down tops'les, down, down for your lives!"

A grey swirl of snow with the squall at the back of it,
Heeling her, reeling her, beating her down!
A gleam of her bends in the thick of the wrack of it,
A flutter of white in the eddies of brown.

It broke in one moment of blizzard and blindness;
The next, like a foul bat, it flapped on its way.
But our ship and our boys! Gracious Lord, in your kindness,
Give help to the mothers who need it to-day!

Give help to the women who wait by the water,
Who stand on the Hard with their eyes past the Wight.
Ah! whisper it gently, you sister or daughter,
"Our boys are all gathered at home for to-night."

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

Hervé Riel

ON the sea and at the Hogue, sixteen hundred ninety-two,
Did the English fight the French,—woe to France!
And, the thirty-first of May, helter-skelter through the blue,
Like a crowd of frightened porpoises a shoal of sharks pursue,
Came crowding ship on ship to St Malo on the Rance,
With the English fleet in view.

'Twas the squadron that escaped, with the victor in full chase;
First and foremost of the drove, in his great ship, Damfreville;
Close on him fled, great and small,
Twenty-two good ships in all;
And they signalled to the place
"Help the winners of a race!
Get us guidance, give us harbour, take us quick—or, quicker still,
Here's the English can and will!"

Then the pilots of the place put out brisk and leapt on board;
"Why, what hope or chance have ships like these to pass?" laughed they:
"Rocks to starboard, rocks to port, all the passage scarred and scored,—
Shall the *Formidable* here, with her twelve and eighty guns,

Think to make the river-mouth by the single
narrow way,
Trust to enter where 'tis ticklish for a craft of
twenty tons,
And with flow at full beside?
Now, 'tis slackest ebb of tide.
Reach the mooring? Rather say,
While rock stands or water runs,
Not a ship will leave the bay!"

Then was called a council straight.
Brief and bitter the debate:
"Here's the English at our heels; would you
have them take in tow
All that's left us of the fleet, linked together stern
and bow,
For a prize to Plymouth Sound?
Better run the ships aground!"
(Ended Damfreville his speech).
"Not a minute more to wait!
Let the Captains all and each
Shove ashore, then blow up, burn the vessels on
the beach!
France must undergo her fate.

"Give the word!" But no such word
Was ever spoke or heard;
For up stood, for out stepped, for in struck amid
all these
—A Captain? A Lieutenant? A Mate—first,
second, third?
No such man of mark, and meet
With his betters to compete!

But a simple Breton sailor pressed by Tourville for the fleet,
A poor coasting-pilot he, Hervé Riel the Croisickese.

And, "What mockery or malice have we here?" cries Hervé Riel:
"Are you mad, you Malouins? Are you cowards, fools, or rogues?
Talk to me of rocks and shoals, me who took the soundings, tell
On my fingers every bank, every shallow, every swell
'Twixt the offing here and Grève where the river disembogues?
Are you bought by English gold? Is it love the lying's for?
Morn and eve, night and day,
Have I piloted your bay,
Entered free and anchored fast at the foot of Solidor.
Burn the fleet and ruin France? That were worse than fifty Hogues!
Sirs, they know I speak the truth! Sirs, believe me there's a way!
Only let me lead the line,
Have the biggest ship to steer,
Get this *Formidable* clear,
Make the others follow mine,
And I lead them, most and least, by a passage I know well,
Right to Solidor past Grève,
And there lay them safe and sound;

And if one ship misbehave,—
—Keel so much as grate the ground,
Why, I've nothing but my life,—here's my head!"
cries Hervé Riel.

Not a minute more to wait.
"Steer us in, then, small and great!
Take the helm, lead the line, save the squadron!" cried its chief.
Captains, give the sailor place!
He is Admiral, in brief.
Still the north-wind, by God's grace!
See the noble fellow's face,
As the big ship, with a bound,
Clears the entry like a hound,
Keeps the passage, as its inch of way were the wide sea's profound!
See, safe thro' shoal and rock,
How they follow in a flock,
Not a ship that misbehaves, not a keel that grates the ground,
Not a spar that comes to grief!
The peril, see, is past,
All are harboured to the last,
And just as Hervé Riel hollas "Anchor!"—sure as fate,
Up the English come, too late!

So, the storm subsides to calm:
They see the green trees wave
On the o'erlooking Grève.
Hearts that bled are stanched with balm.
"Just our rapture to enhance,
Let the English rake the bay,

Gnash their teeth and glare askance,
As they cannonade away!
'Neath rampired Solidor pleasant riding on the Rance!"
How hope succeeds despair on each Captain's countenance!
Out burst all with one accord,
"This is Paradise for Hell!
Let France, let France's King
Thank the man that did the thing!"
What a shout, and all one word,
"Hervé Riel!"
As he stepped in front once more,
Not a symptom of surprise
In the frank blue Breton eyes,
Just the same man as before.

Then said Damfreville, "My friend,
I must speak out at the end,
Though I find the speaking hard.
Praise is deeper than the lips:
You have saved the King his ships,
You must name your own reward.
'Faith our sun was near eclipse!
Demand whate'er you will,
France remains your debtor still.
Ask to heart's content and have! or my name's not Damfreville."

Then a beam of fun outbroke
On the bearded mouth that spoke,
As the honest heart laughed through
Those frank eyes of Breton blue:
"Since I needs must say my say,

Since on board the duty's done,
And from Malo Roads to Croisic Point, what is
it but a run?—
Since 'tis ask and have, I may—
Since the others go ashore—
Come! A good whole holiday!
Leave to go and see my wife, whom I call the
Belle Aurore!"
That he asked and that he got,—nothing more.

Name and deed alike are lost:
Not a pillar nor a post
In his Croisic keeps alive the feat as it befell;
Not a head in white and black
On a single fishing smack,
In memory of the man but for whom had gone to
wrack
All that France saved from the fight whence
England bore the bell.
Go to Paris: rank on rank
Search the heroes flung pell-mell
On the Louvre, face and flank!
You shall look long enough ere you come to
Hervé Riel.
So, for better and for worse,
Hervé Riel, accept my verse!
In my verse, Hervé Riel, do thou once more
Save the squadron, honour France, love thy wife,
the Belle Aurore!

ROBERT BROWNING

Gillespie

RIDING at dawn, riding alone,
Gillespie left the town behind;
Before he turned by the Westward road
A horseman crossed him, staggering blind.

"The Devil's abroad in false Vellore,
The Devil that stabs by night," he said,
"Women and children, rank and file,
Dying and dead, dying and dead."

Without a word, without a groan,
Sudden and swift Gillespie turned,
The blood roared in his ears like fire,
Like fire the road beneath him burned.

He thundered back to Arcot gate,
He thundered up through Arcot town,
Before he thought a second thought
In the barrack yard he lighted down.

"Trumpeter, sound for the Light Dragoons,
Sound to saddle and spur," he said;
"He that is ready may ride with me,
And he that can may ride ahead."

Fierce and fain, fierce and fain,
Behind him went the troopers grim,
They rode as ride the Light Dragoons,
But never a man could ride with him.

Their rowels ripped their horses' sides,
Their hearts were red with a deeper goad,
But ever alone before them all
Gillespie rode, Gillespie rode.

Alone he came to false Vellore,
The walls were lined, the gates were barred;
Alone he walked where the bullets bit,
And called above to the Sergeant's Guard.

"Sergeant, Sergeant, over the gate,
Where are your officers all?" he said;
Heavily came the Sergeant's voice,
"There are two living, and forty dead."

"A rope, a rope," Gillespie cried:
They bound their belts to serve his need;
There was not a rebel behind the wall
But laid his barrel and drew his bead.

There was not a rebel among them all
But pulled his trigger and cursed his aim,
For lightly swung and rightly swung
Over the gate Gillespie came.

He dressed the line, he led the charge,
They swept the wall like a stream in spate,
And roaring over the roar they heard
The galloper guns that burst the gate.

Fierce and fain, fierce and fain,
The troopers rode the reeking flight:
The very stones remember still
The end of them that stab by night.

They've kept the tale a hundred years,
They'll keep the tale a hundred more:
Riding at dawn, riding alone,
Gillespie came to false Vellore.

HENRY NEWBOLT

A Ballad for a Boy

WHEN George the Third was reigning a hundred years ago,
He ordered Captain Farmer to chase the foreign foe.
"You're not afraid of shot," said he, "you're not afraid of wreck,
So cruise about the west of France in the frigate called *Quebec.*

"Quebec was once a Frenchman's town, but twenty years ago
King George the Second sent a man called General Wolfe, you know,
To clamber up a precipice and look into Quebec,
As you'd look down a hatchway when standing on the deck.

"If Wolfe could beat the Frenchmen then so you can beat them now.
Before he got inside the town he died, I must allow.
But since the town was won for us it is a lucky name,
And you'll remember Wolfe's good work, and you shall do the same."

Then Farmer said, "I'll try, sir," and Farmer bowed so low
That George could see his pigtail tied in a velvet bow.
George gave him his commission, and that it might be safer,
Signed "King of Britain, King of France," and sealed it with a wafer.

Then proud was Captain Farmer in a frigate of his own

And grander on his quarter-deck than George
upon his throne.
He'd two guns in his cabin, and on the spar-deck ten,
And twenty on the gun-deck, and more than ten
score men.

And as a huntsman scours the brakes with sixteen
brace of dogs,
With two-and-thirty cannon the ship explored the
fogs.
From Cape la Hogue to Ushant, from Rochefort
to Belleisle,
She hunted game till reef and mud were rubbing
on her keel.

The fogs are dried, the frigate's side is bright
with melting tar,
The lad up in the foretop sees square white sails
afar;
The east wind drives three square-sailed masts
from out the Breton bay,
And "Clear for action!" Farmer shouts, and
reefers yell "Hooray!"

The Frenchmen's captain had a name I wish I
could pronounce;
A Breton gentleman was he, and wholly free from
bounce,
One like those famous fellows who died by
guillotine
For honour and the fleurs-de-lys and Antoinette
the Queen.

The Catholic for Louis, the Protestant for George,
Each captain drew as bright a sword as saintly
smiths could forge;

And both were simple seamen, but both could understand
How each was bound to win or die for flag and native land.

The French ship was *la Surveillante*, which means the watchful maid;
She folded up her head-dress and began to cannonade.
Her hull was clean, and ours was foul; we had to spread more sail.
On canvas, stays, and topsail yards her bullets came like hail.

Sore smitten were both captains, and many lads beside,
And still to cut our rigging the foreign gunners tried.
A sail-clad spar came flapping down athwart a blazing gun;
We could not quench the rushing flames, and so the Frenchman won.

Our quarter-deck was crowded, the waist was all aglow;
Men hung upon the taffrail, half scorched, but loth to go;
Our captain sat where once he stood, and would not quit his chair.
He bade his comrades leap for life, and leave him bleeding there.

The guns were hushed on either side, the Frenchmen lowered boats,
They flung us planks and hencoops, and everything that floats.

They risked their lives, good fellows! to bring
their rivals aid.
'Twas by the conflagration the peace was strangely
made.

La Surveillante was like a sieve; the victors had
no rest.
They had to dodge the east wind to reach the
port of Brest;
And where the waves leapt lower, and the riddled
ship went slower,
In triumph, yet in funeral guise, came fisher-boats
to tow her.

They dealt with us as brethren, they mourned for
Farmer dead;
And as the wounded captives passed each Breton
bowed the head.
Then spoke the French Lieutenant, "'Twas fire
that won, not we.
You never struck your flag to us; you'll go to
England free."

'Twas the sixth day of October, seventeen hundred
seventy-nine,
A year when nations ventured against us to com-
bine,
Quebec was burnt and Farmer slain, by us re-
membered not;
But thanks be to the French book wherein they're
not forgot.

Now you, if you've to fight the French, my
youngster, bear in mind
Those seamen of King Louis so chivalrous and
kind;

Think of the Breton gentlemen who took our lads
to Brest,
And treat some rescued Breton as a comrade and
a guest.

WILLIAM CORY

Moy Castle

A Story of the '45

THERE are seven men in Moy Castle
Are merry men this night;
There are seven men in Moy Castle
Whose hearts are gay and light.

Prince Charlie came to Moy Castle,
And asked for shelter there,
And down came Lady M'Intosh,
As proud as she was fair.

"I'm a hunted man, Lady M'Intosh—
A price is on my head!
If Lord Loudon knew thou'dst sheltered me,
Both thou and I were sped."

"Come in! come in, my prince!" said she,
And opened wide the gate;
"To die with Prince Charlie Stuart,
I ask no better fate."

She's called her seven trusty men,
The blacksmith at their head:
"Ye shall keep watch in the castle wood,
To save your prince from dread."

The lady has led the prince away,
To make him royal cheer;
The seven men of M'Intosh
Have sought the forest drear.

And there they looked and listened,
Listened and looked amain;
And they heard the falling of the leaves,
And the soft sound of the rain.

The blacksmith knelt beside an oak,
And laid his ear to the ground,
And under the noises of the wood
He heard a distant sound.

He heard the sound of many feet
Warily treading the heather—
He heard a sound of many men
Marching softly together.

"There's no time now to warn the prince,
The castle guards are few;
'Tis wit will win the play to-night,
And what we here can do."

He's gien the word to his six brethren,
And through the wood they're gone;
The seven men of M'Intosh
Each stood by himself alone.

"And he who has the pipes at his back,
His best now let him play;
And he who has no pipes at his back,
His best word let him say."

It was five hundred Englishmen
Were treading the purple heather,

Five hundred of Lord Loudon's men
  Marching softly together.

"There's none to-night in Moy Castle
  But servants poor and old;
If we bring the prince to Loudon's lord,
  He'll fill our hands with gold."

They came lightly on their way,
  Had never a thought of ill,
When suddenly from the darksome wood
  Broke out a whistle shrill.

And straight the wood was filled with cries,
  With shouts of angry men,
And the angry skirl of the bagpipes
  Came answering the shouts again.

The Englishmen looked and listened,
  Listened and looked amain,
And nought could they see through the mirk night,
  But the pipes shrieked out again.

"Hark to the slogan of Lochiel,
  To Keppoch's gathering cry!
Hark to the rising swell that tells
  Clanranald's men are nigh!

"Now woe to the men that told us
  Lochiel was far away!
The whole of the Highland army
  Is waiting to bar our way.

"It's little we'll see of Charlie Stuart,
  And little of Loudon's gold,
And but we're away from this armèd wood.
  Our lives have but little hold."

It was five hundred Englishmen,
They turned their faces and ran,
And well for him with the swiftest foot,
For he was the lucky man.

And woe to him who was lame or slow,
For they trampled him on the heather!
And back to the place from whence they came
They're hirpling all together.

Lord Loudon's men, they are gone full far
Over the brow of the hill;
The seven men of M'Intosh,
Their pipes are crying still.

They leaned them to a tree and laughed,
'Twould do ye good to hear,
And they are away to Moy Castle,
To tell their lady dear.

And who but Lady M'Intosh
Would praise her men so bold?
And who but Prince Charlie Stuart
Would count the good French gold?

There are seven men in Moy Castle
Are joyful men this night;
There are seven men in Moy Castle
Whose hearts will aye be light.

Grace Darling

IT was striking five on the Longstone clocks,
And the dawn was grey on a stormy sea,
When the keeper climbed by the lighthouse stair
To darken his lamps, and was swift aware

Of a broken ship on the Harcar Rocks,
Lying helpless less than a mile a-lee.

He called to his daughter, "Look thee, Grace,
There's a steamer aground on the Harcar, girl!
There are sailors clinging to mast and deck!
'Twere a chance in ten we might reach the wreck
Had I three strong men on this manless place
And a boat that could live in yon cauldron swirl!

"But with no one but women to bear me part
I am helpless, indeed, as a man may be.
It were madness to launch in those waves alone,
For, swift as a shell in the breakers thrown,
However so stout were the rower's heart
My cobble would sink in so wild a sea!"

Lissome and brave, but in form so slight
That a strong man's hand might have held her high,
Grace Darling, daughter of sea-kings, said:
"Shall we measure our chance till their chance is fled?"
Then, her hair in the wind and her eyes alight,
"They are men—shall we wait and watch them die?

"I have rowed to the shore when the seas ran steep,
And the old boat weathered it brisk and brave,
And," she laughed, "I was bred to the stretcher's toil;
If I've dared as much for a load of oil
Shall I flinch if the waves on Harcar leap,
With the life of a man in my hand to save?"

The seas broke white on the Longstone Bar,
  The gale still gathered from East by North,
As they carried the oars from room to rock;
And the sun on the ocean rose to mock,
And the wild wind laughed, and the last pale star
  Alone in the heavens looked coldly forth.

O, the little white wrists, they were white and thin,
  But tough as the strands of twisted wire,
And the rounded arms seemed soft and white,
But the clumsy blades were as lances light
As they dipped to the deep seas, out and in,
  In the sweeping strength of a heart's desire!

The spindrift lashed her on brow and cheek,
  The sea-salt shone in her wind-blown hair;
Behind her the lighthouse rose and fell
As they climbed or sank in the ocean swell,
And she heard the oars in the rowlocks creak
  And the storm birds call as they cleft the air.

The tiny cobble was racked and tossed
  Backward and forward, and flogged and flung
From gulf to crest like an autumn leaf,
But they held her head to the Harcar Reef,
And the sailors, seizing a hope half lost,
  To their broken masts with a new life clung.

With hands on the bucking oar-heads numb,
With eyelids sore with the whip of the sea,
With arms grown weary and shoulders strained,
Rod after rod is the far goal gained,

Till at last to the foam of the reef they come,
  And roll to the swell on the steamer's lee.

One after one, where the breakers comb,
  The sailors have dropped to the skiff o'erside
That is held by a maiden's art in place,
And, however the seas may roll or race,
There are stout arms now that shall drive her home
  To the lighthouse tower in the teeth of the tide.

Grace Darling! So long as by Longstone Bar
  The tides shall come and the tides depart,
While Bamburgh walls on the steep shall stand,
Thy fame shall live in Northumberland,
And over its borders out and far
  To wherever men honour a hero-heart!

WILL H. OGILVIE

The High Tide

On the Coast of Lincolnshire, 1571

THE old mayor climbed the belfry tower,
  The ringers rang by two, by three:
"Pull, if ye never pulled before;
  Good ringers, pull your best," quoth he.
"Play up, play up, O Boston bells!
Ply all your changes, all your swells,
  Play up 'The Brides of Enderby.'"

Men say it was a stolen tide—
  The Lord that sent it, He knows all;
But in mine ears doth still abide
  The message that the bells let fall;
And there was naught of strange, beside
The flights of mews and peewits pied
  By millions crouched on the old sea wall.

I sat and spun within the door;
  My thread brake off, I raised mine eyes;
The level sun, like ruddy ore,
  Lay sinking in the barren skies,
And dark against day's golden death
She moved where Lindis wandereth,
  My son's fair wife, Elizabeth.

"Cusha! Cusha! Cusha!" calling,
Ere the early dews were falling,
Far away I heard her song,
"Cusha! Cusha!" all along
Where the reedy Lindis floweth,
    Floweth, floweth;
From the meads where melick groweth
Faintly came her milking song—
"Cusha! Cusha! Cusha!" calling,
"For the dews will soon be falling;
Leave your meadow grasses mellow,
    Mellow, mellow;
Quit your cowslips, cowslips yellow;
Come up Whitefoot, come up Lightfoot,
Quit the stalks of parsley hollow,
    Hollow, hollow;
Come up Jetty, rise and follow,
From the clovers lift your head;

Come up Whitefoot, come up Lightfoot,
Come up Jetty, rise and follow,
Jetty, to the milking shed."

If it be long, aye, long ago,
When I begin to think how long,
Again I hear the Lindis flow,
Swift as an arrow, sharp and strong·
And all the air, it seemeth me,
Bin full of floating bells (saith she),
That ring the tune of Enderby.

All fresh the level pasture lay,
And not a shadow might be seen,
Save where full five good miles away
The steeple towered from out the green;
And lo! the great bell far and wide
Was heard in all the country side
That Saturday at eventide.

The swan-herds, where their sedges are,
Moved on in sunset's golden breath,
The shepherd lads I heard afar,
And my son's wife, Elizabeth;
Till, floating o'er the grassy lea,
Came down that kindly message free,
The "Brides of Mavis Enderby."

Then some looked up into the sky,
And all along where Lindis flows
To where the goodly vessels lie
And where the lordly steeple shows.
They said, "And why should this thing be?

What danger lowers by land or sea?
They ring the tune of Enderby!

"For evil news from Mablethorpe,
Of pirate galleys warping down;
For ships ashore beyond the scorpe
They have not spared to wake the town:
But while the west bin red to see,
And storms be none, and pirates flee,
Why ring 'The Brides of Enderby'?"

I looked without, and lo! my son
Came riding down with might and main:
He raised a shout as he drew on,
Till all the welkin rang again,
"Elizabeth! Elizabeth!"
(A sweeter woman ne'er drew breath
Than my son's wife, Elizabeth.)

"The old sea wall," he cried, "is down,
The rising tide comes on apace,
And boats adrift in yonder town
Go sailing up the market place."
He shook as one that looks on death:
"God save you, mother," straight he saith;
"Where is my wife, Elizabeth?"

"Good son, where Lindis winds away,
With her two bairns I marked her long;
And ere yon bells began to play
Afar I heard her milking song."
He looked across the grassy lea,
To right, to left, "Ho, Enderby!"
They rang "The Brides of Enderby!"

With that he cried and beat his breast;
For lo! along the river's bed
A mighty eagre reared his crest,
And up the Lindis raging sped;
It swept with thunderous noises loud,
Shaped like a curling snow-white cloud,
Or like a demon in a shroud.

And rearing Lindis, backward pressed,
Shook all her trembling banks amain;
Then madly at the eagre's breast
Flung up her weltering walls again.
Then banks came down with ruin and rout—
Then beaten foam flew round about—
Then all the mighty floods were out.

So far, so fast the eagre drave,
The heart had hardly time to beat,
Before a shallow seething wave
Sobbed in the grasses at our feet:
The feet had hardly time to flee
Before it brake against the knee,
And all the world was in the sea.

Upon the roof we sate that night,
The noise of bells went sweeping by,
I marked the lofty beacon light
Stream from the church tower, red and high—
A lurid mark and dread to see;
And awsome bells they were to me,
That in the dark rang "Enderby."

They rang the sailor lads to guide
From roof to roof who fearless rowed;

And I—my son was at my side,
  And yet the ruddy beacon glowed;
And yet he moaned beneath his breath,
"O come in life, or come in death!
O lost! my love, Elizabeth."

And didst thou visit him no more?
  Thou didst, thou didst, my daughter dear;
The waters laid thee at his door,
  Ere yet the early dawn was clear.
Thy pretty bairns in fast embrace,
The lifted sun shone on thy face,
Down drifted to thy dwelling-place.

That flow strewed wrecks about the grass,
  That ebb swept out the flocks to sea;
A fatal ebb and flow, alas!
  To many more than mine and me:
But each will mourn his own (she saith),
And sweeter woman ne'er drew breath
Than my son's wife, Elizabeth.

I shall never hear her more
By the reedy Lindis shore,
"Cusha! Cusha! Cusha!" calling,
Ere the early dews be falling;
I shall never hear her song,
"Cusha! Cusha!" all along
Where the sunny Lindis floweth,
    Goeth, floweth;
From the meads where melick groweth,
When the water winding down
Onward floweth to the town.

I shall never see her more
Where the reeds and rushes quiver
Shiver, quiver;
Stand beside the sobbing river,
Sobbing, throbbing, in its falling
To the sandy lonesome shore;
I shall never hear her calling,

"Leave your meadow grasses mellow,
Mellow, mellow;
Quit your cowslips, cowslips yellow;
Come up Whitefoot, come up Lightfoot;
Quit your pipes of parsley hollow,
Hollow, hollow;
Come up Lightfoot, rise and follow;
Lightfoot, Whitefoot,
From your clovers lift the head;
Come up Jetty, follow, follow,
Jetty, to the milking shed."

JEAN INGELOW

David Gwyn

DAVID GWYN was a Welshman bold who
pined a slave in the hulks of Spain,
Taken years since in some mad emprise
with Francis Drake on the Spanish main.
Long in that cruel country he shared the captive's
bitter and hapless lot;
Slowly the dead years passed and left him dream-
ing still of the days that were not,
Of tiny Radnor, or stately Brecknock, or Cardigan's
rain-swept heights may be,

Or green Caermarthen, or rich Glamorgan, or Pembroke sitting on either sea.
Sickening within his squalid prison, while still as the circling seasons came
The fierce sun beat on the brown Sierras, spring-tide and summer and autumn the same,
Almost hope failed the dauntless sailor, chained in an alien and hateful land,
Lonely and friendless, starved and buffeted, none to pity or understand,
Pining always and ageing yearly as slow Time whitened and bowed his head,
While longing and hate burned high and higher, as life sank lower and hope fell dead,
With brutes for his gaolers, and fiends for his fellows, chained to him ceaselessly night and day,
Eleven autumns, eleven winters wasted their wearisome length away.
Then there awoke round his floating prison clang of hammers and bustle of men;
Shipwrights labouring late and early woke old thoughts in his heart again.
"Spain will lay waste your heretic island with fire and sword ere the winter be come,
And you and the rest of your felon crew shall row the galleys which sack your home."
The hot blood flushed to the prisoner's forehead, but never a word in reply said he,
Toiling obediently days and weeks till the great fleet sailed on the summer sea—
Splendid galleons towering skyward with gilded masts and with streamers brave,
Floating proudly to martial music over the blue Lusitanian wave,

Four great galleys leading the van, and in one
midst the close-thronged benches sate
David Gwyn, a forgotten oarsman, nursing a burning heart of hate.

So along the windless ocean slow the great Armada
sped,
Two unclouded weeks of summer blazed the hot
sun overhead.
Hourly from the high deck-pulpits preaching rose
and chant and prayer,
And the cloying fumes of incense on the brisk
Atlantic air;
Courtiers fine and sea-worn sailors jesting the
slow hours away,
Silken sails and blazoned standards flapping idly
day by day,
And within his high poop-turret, more than mortal
to behold,
The High Admiral Medina lounging idly, clothed
with gold:
Not a thought of peril touched them, not a dream
of what might come,
Proudly sailing, sure of conquest, with the benison
of Rome,
And far down among the oarsmen's benches,
fainting, desperate,
David Gwyn, a patriot helpless with a burning
heart of hate.

With the roaring Bay of Biscay louder winds and
greyer skies,
And the galleons plunge and labour, and the rolling
mountains rise;

Blacker loom the drifting storm-clouds, fiercer
grow the wind and sea,
Far and wide the galleons scatter, driving, drifting
helplessly.
Higher mount the thundering surges; tossed to
heaven, or fathoms down,
Rear or plunge the cumbrous galleys while the
helpless oarsmen drown.
Like a diver the *Diana* slides head first beneath
the wave,
Not a soul of all her hundreds may her labouring
consorts save.
Now to larboard, now to starboard, shattered, tossed
from side to side,
Helpless rolls the great Armada, shorn of all its
pomp and pride.
Down between those toppling ridges, groaning,
straining in his place,
David Gwyn among the oarsmen sits with triumph
in his face.

Then amid the roaring seas, when hope was gone
and death was near,
And the hearts of all the Spanish sinking, failing
them for fear,
Boldly to the haughty Captain, David Gwyn the
oarsman went,
Veiling with a fearless frankness all the depth of
his intent.
"Quick, Señor! the ship is sinking; like her
consort will she be,
Buried soon with slaves and freemen, fathoms
deep beneath the sea.
Give me leave and I will save her; I have fought
the winds before,

Fought and conquered storms and foemen many a
time on sea and shore."
And the haughty Captain, knowing David Gwyn
a seaman bold,
Since upon the Spanish main the foemen sailed
and fought of old,
Answered, turning to his prisoner: "Save the
ship, and thou shalt gain
Freedom from thy life-long fetters, guerdon from
the Lord of Spain."
Then from out the prisoner's eye there flashed a
sudden gleam of flame,
And a light of secret triumph o'er his clouded
visage came,
Thinking of his Cymric homestead and the fair
years that were gone,
And his glory who should save her from the
thraldom of the Don.
"I will save your ship," he answered; "trust me
wholly, have no fear:
Pack the soldiers under hatches; leave the main
deck free and clear."
Doubting much the Don consented; only, lest the
slaves should rise,
By each oarsman sat a soldier, watching him with
jealous eyes.
Little knew he of the cunning, secret signs, and
watchwords born
Of long years of cruel fetters, stripes and hunger,
spite and scorn.
Little thought he every prisoner as in misery he
sate
Hid a dagger in his waistband, waiting for the call
of Fate.

David Gwyn, the valiant seaman, long time
battled with the main,
Till the furious storm-wind slackened and the
ship was safe again.
Sudden then he gave the signal, raised his arm and
bared his head.
Every oarsman rising swiftly stabbed his helpless
warder dead,
Seized his arms, and, fired with conquest, mad with
vengeance, like a flood
On the crowded 'tween-decks bursting, left the
Spaniards in their blood.
David Gwyn was now the Captain, and the great
ship all his own;
Well the slaves obeyed their comrade, thus to
sudden greatness grown.
Straight for France the stout *Vasana* shaping,
sudden on her lee
Don Diego in the *Royal*, foaming through the
stricken sea,
Driven by full four hundred oarsmen, nigh the
monstrous galley drew.
Then from out her thundering broadside swift the
sudden lightning flew;
In among Gwyn's crowded seamen straight the
hurtling missiles sped;
Nine strong sailors in a moment lay around their
Captain dead.
David Gwyn, the dauntless Captain, turning to his
comrades then—
"God has given you freedom; earn it: fear not;
quit yourselves like men.
Lay the ship aboard the *Royal*: free your
comrades and be free."

The strong oarsmen bent, obedient, rowing swiftly, silently,
Till, as if in middle ocean striking on a hidden rock,
All the stout *Vasana's* timbers, quivering, reeling with the shock,
Straight on board the crowded *Royal* leapt that band of desperate men,
Freed the slaves, and left no Spaniard who might tell the tale again;
And the sister galleys stately with fair winds sped safely on,
Under David Gwyn, their Captain, and cast anchor at Bayonne.
Then King Henry gave them largesse, and they parted, every one
Free once more to his own country, and their evil days were done.

SIR LEWIS MORRIS

Edinburgh after Flodden

NEWS of battle!—news of battle!
Hark! 'tis ringing down the street;
And the archways and the pavement
Bear the clang of hurrying feet.
News of battle? Who hath brought it?
News of triumph? Who should bring
Tidings from our noble army,
Greetings from our gallant King?
All last night we watched the beacons
Blazing on the hills afar,
Each one bearing, as it kindled,
Message of the opened war.

All night long the northern streamers
Shot across the trembling sky:
Fearful lights, that never beckon
Save when kings or heroes die.

News of battle! Who hath brought it?
All are thronging to the gate;
"Warder—warder! open quickly!
Man—is this a time to wait?"
And the heavy gates are opened:
Then a murmur long and loud,
And a cry of fear and wonder
Bursts from out the bending crowd.
For they see in battered harness
Only one hard-stricken man;
And his weary steed is wounded,
And his cheek is pale and wan:
Spearless hangs a bloody banner
In his weak and drooping hand—
God! can that be Randolph Murray,
Captain of the city band?

Round him crush the people, crying,
"Tell us all—oh, tell us true!
Where are they who went to battle,
Randolph Murray, sworn to you?
Where are they, our brothers—children?
Have they met the English foe?
Why art thou alone, unfollowed?
Is it weal, or is it woe?"
Like a corpse the grisly warrior
Looks from out his helm of steel;
But no word he speaks in answer—
Only with his armèd heel

Chides his weary steed, and onward
Up the city streets they ride;
Fathers, sisters, mothers, children,
Shrieking, praying by his side.
"By the God that made thee, Randolph,
Tell us what mischance hath come."
Then he lifts his riven banner,
And the asker's voice is dumb.

The elders of the city
Have met within their hall—
The men whom good King James had charged
To watch the tower and wall.
"Your hands are weak with age," he said,
"Your hearts are stout and true;
So bide ye in the Maiden Town,
While others fight for you.
My trumpet from the Border-side
Shall send a blast so clear,
That all who wait within the gate
That stirring sound may hear.
Or, if it be the will of Heaven
That back I never come,
And if, instead of Scottish shouts,
Ye hear the English drum—
Then let the warning bells ring out,
Then gird you to the fray,
Then man the walls like burghers stout,
And fight while fight you may.
'Twere better that in fiery flame
The roof should thunder down,
Than that the foot of foreign foe
Should trample in the town!"

Then in came Randolph Murray,—
His step was slow and weak,
And, as he doffed his dinted helm,
The tears ran down his cheek:
They fell upon his corslet
And on his mailèd hand,
As he gazed around him wistfully,
Leaning sorely on his brand.
And none who then beheld him
But straight were smote with fear,
For a bolder and a sterner man
Had never couched a spear.
They knew so sad a messenger
Some ghastly news must bring;
And all of them were fathers,
And their sons were with the King.

And up then rose the Provost—
A brave old man was he,
Of ancient name, and knightly fame,
And chivalrous degree.
He ruled our city like a Lord
Who brooked no equal here,
And ever for the townsman's rights
Stood up 'gainst prince and peer.
And he had seen the Scottish host
March from the Borough-muir,
With music-storm and clamorous shout,
And all the din that thunders out
When youth's of victory sure.
But, yet a dearer thought had he,—
For, with a father's pride,
He saw his last remaining son
Go forth by Randolph's side,

With casque on head and spur on heel,
All keen to do and dare;
And proudly did that gallant boy
Dunedin's banner bear.
Oh, woeful now was the old man's look,
And he spake right heavily—
"Now, Randolph, tell thy tidings,
However sharp they be!
Woe is written on thy visage
Death is looking from thy face:
Speak, though it be of overthrow—
It cannot be disgrace!"

Right bitter was the agony
That wrung that soldier proud:
Thrice did he strive to answer,
And thrice he groaned aloud.
Then he gave the riven banner
To the old man's shaking hand,
Saying—"That is all I bring ye
From the bravest of the land!
Ay! ye may look upon it—
It was guarded well and long,
By your brothers and your children,
By the valiant and the strong.
One by one they fell around it,
As the archers laid them low,
Grimly dying, still unconquered,
With their faces to the foe.
Ay! ye well may look upon it—
There is more than honour there,
Else, be sure, I had not brought it
From the field of dark despair.

Never yet was royal banner
  Steeped in such a costly dye;
It hath lain upon a bosom
  Where no other shroud shall lie.
Sirs! I charge you, keep it holy;
  Keep it as a sacred thing,
For the stain ye see upon it
  Was the life-blood of your King!"

Woe, and woe, and lamentation!
  What a piteous cry was there!
Widows, maidens, mothers, children,
  Shrieking, sobbing in despair!
Through the streets the death-word rushes,
  Spreading terror, sweeping on—
"Jesu Christ! our King has fallen—
  O Great God, King James is gone!
Holy Mother Mary, shield us,
  Thou who erst didst lose thy Son!
O the blackest day for Scotland
  That she ever knew before!
O our King—the good, the noble,
  Shall we see him never more?
Woe to us, and woe to Scotland!
  O our sons, our sons and men!
Surely some have 'scaped the Southron,
  Surely some will come again!"
Till the oak that fell last winter
  Shall uprear its shattered stem—
Wives and mothers of Dunedin—
  Ye may look in vain for them!

But within the Council Chamber
  All was silent as the grave,

Whilst the tempest of their sorrow
Shook the bosoms of the brave.
Well indeed might they be shaken
With the weight of such a blow:
He was gone—their prince, their idol,
Whom they loved and worshipped so!
Like a knell of death and judgment
Rung from heaven by angel hand,
Fell the words of desolation
On the elders of the land.
Hoary heads were bowed and trembling,
Withered hands were clasped and wrung;
God had left the old and feeble,
He had ta'en away the young.

Then the Provost he uprose,
And his lip was ashen white;
But a flush was on his brow,
And his eye was full of light.
"Thou has spoken, Randolph Murray,
Like a soldier stout and true;
Thou hast done a deed of daring
Had been perilled but by few.
For thou hast not shamed to face us,
Nor to speak thy ghastly tale,
Standing—thou a knight and captain—
Here, alive within thy mail!
Now, as my God shall judge me,
I hold it braver done,
Than hadst thou tarried in thy place,
And died above my son!
Thou needst not tell it: he is dead.
God help us all this day!

But speak—how fought the citizens
Within the furious fray?
For by the might of Mary!
'Twere something still to tell
That no Scottish foot went backward
When the Royal Lion fell!"

"No one failed him! He is keeping
Royal state and semblance still;
Knight and noble lie around him,
Cold on Flodden's fatal hill.
Of the brave and gallant-hearted,
Whom ye sent with prayers away,
Not a single man departed
From his Monarch yesterday.
Had you seen them, O my masters!
When the night began to fall,
And the English spearmen gathered
Round a grim and ghastly wall!
As the wolves in winter circle
Round the leaguer on the heath,
So the greedy foe glared upward,
Panting still for blood and death.
But a rampart rose before them,
Which the boldest dared not scale;
Every stone a Scottish body,
Every step a corpse in mail!
And behind it lay our Monarch,
Clenching still his shivered sword:
By his side Montrose and Athole,
At his feet a Southron lord.
All so thick they lay together,
When the stars lit up the sky,
That I knew not who were stricken,

Or who yet remained to die.
Few there were when Surrey halted,
And his wearied host withdrew;
None but dying men around me,
When the English trumpet blew.
Then I stooped, and took the banner,
As you see it, from his breast,
And I closed our hero's eyelids,
And I left him to his rest.
In the mountains growled the thunder,
As I leaped the woeful wall,
And the heavy clouds were settling
Over Flodden, like a pall."

So he ended. And the others
Cared not any answer then;
Sitting silent, dumb with sorrow,
Sitting anguish-struck, like men
Who have seen the roaring torrent
Sweep their happy homes away,
And yet linger by the margin,
Staring wildly on the spray.
But, without, the maddening tumult
Waxes ever more and more,
And the crowd of wailing women
Gather round the council door.
Every dusky spire is ringing
With a dull and hollow knell,
And the Miserere's singing
To the tolling of the bell.
Through the streets the burghers hurry,
Spreading terror as they go;
And the rampart's thronged with watchers
For the coming of the foe.

From each mountain-top a pillar
  Streams into the torpid air,
Bearing token from the Border
  That the English host is there.
All without is flight and terror,
  All within is woe and fear—
God protect thee, Maiden City,
  For thy latest hour is near!

No! not yet, thou high Dunedin!
  Shalt thou totter to thy fall,
Though thy bravest and thy strongest
  Are not there to man the wall.
No, not yet! the ancient spirit
  Of our fathers hath not gone;
Take it to thee as a buckler
  Better far than steel or stone.
Oh, remember those who perished
  For thy birthright at the time
When to be a Scot was treason,
  And to side with Wallace crime!
Have they not a voice among us,
  Whilst their hallowed dust is here?
Hear ye not a summons sounding
  From each buried warrior's bier?
Up!—they say—and keep the freedom
  Which we won you long ago:
Up! and keep our graves unsullied
  From the insults of the foe!
Up! and if ye cannot save them,
  Come to us in blood and fire:
Midst the crash of falling turrets
  Let the last of Scots expire!

Still the bells are tolling fiercely,
And the cry comes louder in;
Mothers wailing for their children,
Sisters for their slaughtered kin.
All is terror and disorder;
Till the Provost rises up,
Calm, as though he had not tasted
Of the fell and bitter cup.
All so stately from his sorrow,
Rose the old undaunted chief,
That you had not deemed, to see him,
His was more than common grief.
"Rouse ye, Sirs!" he said; "we may not
Longer mourn for what is done;
If our King be taken from us,
We are left to guard his son.
We have sworn to keep the city
From the foe, whate'er they be,
And the oath that we have taken
Never shall be broke by me.
Death is nearer to us, brethren,
Than it seemed to those who died,
Fighting yesterday at Flodden,
By their lord and master's side.
Let us meet it then in patience,
Not in terror or in fear;
Though our hearts are bleeding yonder,
Let our souls be steadfast here.
Up, and rouse ye! Time is fleeting,
And we yet have much to do;
Up! and haste ye through the city,
Stir the burghers stout and true!
Gather all our scattered people,
Fling the banner out once more,—

Randolph Murray! do thou bear it,
As it erst was borne before:
Never Scottish heart will leave it,
When they see their Monarch's gore!

"Let them cease that dismal knelling!
It is time enough to ring,
When the fortress-strength of Scotland
Stoops to ruin like its King.
Let the bells be kept for warning,
Not for terror or alarm;
When they next are heard to thunder,
Let each man and stripling arm.
Bid the women leave their wailing—
Do they think that woeful strain,
From the bloody heaps of Flodden
Can redeem their dearest slain?
Bid them cease,—or rather hasten
To the churches every one;
There to pray to Mary Mother,
And to her anointed Son,
That the thunderbolt above us
May not fall in ruin yet;
That in fire and blood and rapine
Scotland's glory may not set.
Let them pray,—for never women
Stood in need of such a prayer!—
England's yeomen shall not find them
Clinging to the altars there.
No! if we are doomed to perish,
Man and maiden, let us fall,
And a common gulf of ruin
Open wide to whelm us all!

Never shall the ruthless spoiler
  Lay his hot insulting hand
On the sisters of our heroes,
  Whilst we bear a torch or brand!
Up! and rouse ye, then, my brothers,—
  But when next ye hear the bell
Sounding forth the sullen summons
  That may be our funeral knell,
Once more let us meet together,
  Once more see each other's face;
Then, like men that need not tremble,
  Go to our appointed place.
God, our Father, will not fail us,
  In that last tremendous hour,—
If all other bulwarks crumble,
  HE will be our strength and tower:
Though the ramparts rock beneath us,
  And the walls go crashing down,
Though the roar of conflagration
  Bellow o'er the sinking town;
There is yet one place of shelter,
  Where the foemen cannot come,
Where the summons never sounded
  Of the trumpet or the drum.
There again we'll meet our children,
  Who, on Flodden's trampled sod,
For their king and for their country
  Rendered up their souls to God.
There shall we find rest and refuge,
  With our dear departed brave;
And the ashes of the city
  Be our universal grave!"

W. E. AYTOUN

Horatius

LARS PORSENA of Clusium
By the Nine Gods he swore
That the great house of Tarquin
Should suffer wrong no more.
By the Nine Gods he swore it,
And named a trysting day,
And bade his messengers ride forth,
East and west and south and north,
To summon his array.

East and west and south and north
The messengers ride fast,
And tower and town and cottage
Have heard the trumpet's blast.
Shame on the false Etruscan
Who lingers in his home,
When Porsena of Clusium
Is on the march for Rome.

The horsemen and the footmen
Are pouring in amain
From many a stately market-place;
From many a fruitful plain;
From many a lonely hamlet,
Which, hid by beech and pine,
Like an eagle's nest, hangs on the crest
Of purple Apennine;

From lordly Volaterræ,
Where scowls the far-famed hold

Piled by the hands of giants
For godlike kings of old;
From seagirt Populonia,
Whose sentinels descry
Sardinia's snowy mountain-tops
Fringing the southern sky;

From the proud mart of Pisæ,
Queen of the western waves,
Where ride Massilia's triremes
Heavy with fair-haired slaves;
From where sweet Clanis wanders
Through corn and vines and flowers;
From where Cortona lifts to heaven
Her diadem of towers.

Tall are the oaks whose acorns
Drop in dark Auser's rill;
Fat are the stags that champ the boughs
Of the Ciminian hill;
Beyond all streams Clitumnus
Is to the herdsman dear;
Best of all pools the fowler loves
The great Volsinian mere.

But now no stroke of woodman
Is heard by Auser's rill;
No hunter tracks the stag's green path
Up the Ciminian hill;
Unwatched along Clitumnus
Grazes the milk-white steer;
Unharmed the water fowl may dip
In the Volsinian mere.

The harvests of Arretium,
This year old men shall reap,
This year young boys in Umbro
Shall plunge the struggling sheep;
And in the vats of Luna,
This year the must shall foam
Round the white feet of laughing girls
Whose sires have marched to Rome.

There be thirty chosen prophets,
The wisest of the land,
Who alway by Lars Porsena
Both morn and evening stand:
Evening and morn the Thirty
Have turned the verses o'er,
Traced from the right on linen white
By mighty seers of yore.

And with one voice the Thirty
Have their glad answer given:
"Go forth, go forth, Lars Porsena;
Go forth, beloved of Heaven;
Go, and return in glory
To Clusium's royal dome;
And hang round Nurscia's altars
The golden shields of Rome."

And now hath every city
Sent up her tale of men;
The foot are fourscore thousand,
The horse are thousands ten:
Before the gates of Sutrium
Is met the great array.
A proud man was Lars Porsena
Upon the trysting day!

For all the Etruscan armies
  Were ranged beneath his eye,
And many a banished Roman,
  And many a stout ally;
And with a mighty following
  To join the muster came
The Tusculan Mamilius,
  Prince of the Latian name.

But by the yellow Tiber
  Was tumult and affright:
From all the spacious champaign
  To Rome men took their flight.
A mile around the city,
  The throng stopped up the ways;
A fearful sight it was to see
  Through two long nights and days

For aged folks on crutches,
  And women great with child,
And mothers sobbing over babes
  That clung to them and smiled,
And sick men borne in litters
  High on the necks of slaves,
And troops of sun-burned husbandmen
  With reaping-hooks and staves,

And droves of mules and asses
  Laden with skins of wine,
And endless flocks of goats and sheep,
  And endless herds of kine,
And endless trains of waggons
  That creaked beneath the weight
Of corn-sacks and of household goods,
  Choked every roaring gate.

Now, from the rock Tarpeian
  Could the wan burghers spy
The line of blazing villages
  Red in the midnight sky.
The Fathers of the City,
  They sat all night and day,
For every hour some horseman came
  With tidings of dismay.

To eastward and to westward
  Have spread the Tuscan bands;
Nor house, nor fence, nor dovecote
  In Crustumerium stands.
Verbenna down to Ostia
  Hath wasted all the plain;
Astur hath stormed Janiculum,
  And the stout guards are slain.

I wis, in all the Senate,
  There was no heart so bold,
But sore it ached and fast it beat,
  When that ill news was told.
Forthwith up rose the Consul,
  Up rose the Fathers all;
In haste they girded up their gowns,
  And hied them to the wall.

They held a council standing
  Before the River-Gate;
Short time was there, ye well may guess,
  For musing or debate.
Out spake the Consul roundly:
  "The bridge must straight go down;
For, since Janiculum is lost,
  Naught else can save the town."

Just then a scout came flying,
All wild with haste and fear:
"To arms! to arms! Sir Consul:
Lars Porsena is here."
On the low hills to westward
The Consul fixed his eye,
And saw the swarthy storm of dust
Rise fast along the sky.

And nearer fast and nearer
Doth the red whirlwind come;
And louder still and still more loud,
From underneath that rolling cloud,
Is heard the trumpet's war-note proud,
The trampling and the hum.
And plainly and more plainly
Now through the gloom appears,
Far to left and far to right,
In broken gleams of dark-blue light,
The long array of helmets bright,
The long array of spears.

And plainly and more plainly,
Above that glimmering line,
Now might ye see the banners
Of twelve fair cities shine;
But the banner of proud Clusium
Was highest of them all,
The terror of the Umbrian,
The terror of the Gaul.

And plainly and more plainly
Now might the burghers know,
By port and vest, by horse and crest,
Each warlike Lucumo.

There Cilnius of Arretium
On his fleet roan was seen;
And Astur of the fourfold shield,
Girt with the brand none else may wield,
Tolumnius with the belt of gold,
And dark Verbenna from the hold
By reedy Thrasymene.

Fast by the royal standard,
O'erlooking all the war,
Lars Porsena of Clusium
Sat in his ivory car.
By the right wheel rode Mamilius,
Prince of the Latian name;
And by the left false Sextus,
That wrought the deed of shame.

But when the face of Sextus
Was seen among the foes,
A yell that rent the firmament
From all the town arose.
On the house-tops was no woman
But spat towards him and hissed;
No child but screamed out curses,
And shook its little fist.

But the Consul's brow was sad,
And the Consul's speech was low,
And darkly looked he at the wall,
And darkly at the foe.
"Their van will be upon us
Before the bridge goes down;
And if they once may win the bridge
What hope to save the town?"

Then out spake brave Horatius,
The Captain of the Gate:
"To every man upon this earth
Death cometh soon or late;
And how can man die better
Than facing fearful odds,
For the ashes of his fathers
And the temples of his Gods,

"And for the tender mother
Who dandled him to rest,
And for the wife who nurses
His baby at her breast,
And for the holy maidens
Who feed the eternal flame,
To save them from false Sextus,
That wrought the deed of shame?

"Hew down the bridge, Sir Consul,
With all the speed ye may;
I, with two more to help me,
Will hold the foe in play.
In yon strait path a thousand
May well be stopped by three.
Now who will stand on either hand,
And keep the bridge with me?"

Then out spake Spurius Lartius,
A Ramnian proud was he:
"Lo, I will stand at thy right hand,
And keep the bridge with thee."
And out spake strong Herminius;
Of Titian blood was he:
"I will abide on thy left side,
And keep the bridge with thee."

"Horatius," quoth the Consul,
"As thou sayest, so let it be."
And straight against that great array
Forth went the dauntless Three.
For Romans in Rome's quarrel
Spared neither land nor gold,
Nor son nor wife, nor limb nor life,
In the brave days of old.

Then none was for a party;
Then all were for the state;
Then the great man helped the poor,
And the poor man loved the great:
Then lands were fairly portioned;
Then spoils were fairly sold:
The Romans were like brothers
In the brave days of old.

Now Roman is to Roman
More hateful than a foe,
And the Tribunes beard the high,
And the Fathers grind the low.
As we wax hot in faction,
In battle we wax cold:
Wherefore men fight not as they fought
In the brave days of old.

Now while the Three were tightening
Their harness on their backs,
The Consul was the foremost man
To take in hand an axe:
And Fathers mixed with Commons,
Seized hatchet, bar and crow,
And smote upon the planks above,
And loosed the props below.

Meanwhile the Tuscan army,
Right glorious to behold,
Came flashing back the noonday light,
Rank behind rank, like surges bright
Of a broad sea of gold.
Four hundred trumpets sounded
A peal of warlike glee,
As that great host, with measured tread,
And spears advanced, and ensigns spread,
Rolled slowly towards the bridge's head,
Where stood the dauntless Three.

The three stood calm and silent,
And looked upon the foes,
And a great shout of laughter
From all the vanguard rose:
And forth three chiefs came spurring
Before that deep array;
To earth they sprang, their swords they drew,
And lifted high their shields, and flew
To win the narrow way:

Aunus from green Tifernum,
Lord of the Hill of Vines;
And Seius, whose eight hundred slaves
Sicken in Ilva's mines;
And Picus, long to Clusium
Vassal in peace and war,
Who led to fight his Umbrian powers
From that grey crag where, girt with towers,
The fortress of Nequinum lowers
O'er the pale waves of Nar.

Stout Lartius hurled down Aunus
Into the stream beneath:

Herminius struck at Seius,
And clove him to the teeth:
At Picus brave Horatius
Darted one fiery thrust,
And the proud Umbrian's gilded arms
Clashed in the bloody dust.

Then Ocnus of Falerii
Rushed on the Roman Three:
And Lausulus of Urgo,
The rover of the sea;
And Aruns of Volsinium,
Who slew the great wild boar,
The great wild boar that had his den
Amidst the reeds of Cosa's fen,
And wasted fields, and slaughtered men,
Along Albinia's shore.

Herminius smote down Aruns:
Lartius laid Ocnus low:
Right to the heart of Lausulus
Horatius sent a blow.
"Lie there," he cried, "fell pirate!
No more, aghast and pale,
From Ostia's wall the crowd shall mark
The track of thy destroying bark.
No more Campania's hinds shall fly
To woods and caverns when they spy
Thy thrice-accursèd sail."

But now no sound of laughter
Was heard among the foes,
A wild and wrathful clamour
From all the vanguard rose.

Six spears' lengths from the entrance
  Halted that deep array,
And for a space no man came forth
  To win the narrow way.

But hark! the cry is Astur:
  And lo! the ranks divide;
And the great Lord of Luna
  Comes with his stately stride.
Upon his ample shoulders
  Clangs loud the fourfold shield,
And in his hand he shakes the brand
  Which none but he can wield.

He smiled on those bold Romans
  A smile serene and high;
He eyed the flinching Tuscans,
  And scorn was in his eye.
Quoth he, "The she-wolf's litter
  Stand savagely at bay:
But will ye dare to follow,
  If Astur clears the way?"

Then, whirling up his broadsword
  With both hands to the height,
He rushed against Horatius,
  And smote with all his might.
With shield and blade Horatius
  Right deftly turned the blow.
The blow, though turned, came yet too nigh;
It missed his helm, but gashed his thigh:
The Tuscans raised a joyful cry
  To see the red blood flow.

He reeled, and on Herminius
  He leaned one breathing-space;

Then, like a wild cat mad with wounds,
Sprang right at Astur's face;
Through teeth, and skull, and helmet
So fierce a thrust he sped,
The good sword stood a hand-breadth out
Behind the Tuscan's head.

And the great Lord of Luna
Fell at that deadly stroke,
As falls on Mount Alvernus
A thunder-smitten oak.
Far o'er the crashing forest
The giant arms lie spread;
And the pale augurs, muttering low,
Gaze on the blasted head.

On Astur's throat Horatius
Right firmly pressed his heel,
And thrice and four times tugged amain,
Ere he wrenched out the steel.
"And see," he cried, "the welcome,
Fair guests, that waits you here!
What noble Lucumo comes next
To taste our Roman cheer?"

But at his haughty challenge
A sullen murmur ran,
Mingled of wrath, and shame, and dread,
Along that glittering van.
There lacked not men of prowess,
Nor men of lordly race;
For all Etruria's noblest
Were round the fatal place.

But all Etruria's noblest
Felt their hearts sink to see

On the earth the bloody corpses,
In the path the dauntless Three:
And, from the ghastly entrance
Where those bold Romans stood,
All shrank, like boys who unaware,
Ranging the woods to start a hare,
Come to the mouth of the dark lair
Where, growling low, a fierce old bear
Lies amidst bones and blood.

Was none who would be foremost
To lead such dire attack:
But those behind cried, "Forward!"
And those before cried, "Back!"
And backward now and forward
Wavers the deep array;
And on the tossing sea of steel,
To and fro the standards reel;
And the victorious trumpet-peal
Dies fitfully away.

Yet one man for one moment
Stood out before the crowd;
Well known was he to all the Three,
And they gave him greeting loud,
"Now welcome, welcome, Sextus!
Now welcome to thy home!
Why dost thou stay, and turn away?
Here lies the road to Rome."

Thrice looked he at the city;
Thrice looked he at the dead;
And thrice came on in fury,
And thrice turned back in dread:

And, white with fear and hatred,
Scowled at the narrow way,
Where, wallowing in a pool of blood,
The bravest Tuscans lay.

But meanwhile axe and lever
Have manfully been plied;
And now the bridge hangs tottering
Above the boiling tide.
"Come back, come back, Horatius!"
Loud cried the Fathers all.
"Back, Lartius! back, Herminius!
Back, ere the ruin fall!"

Back darted Spurius Lartius;
Herminius darted back:
And, as they passed, beneath their feet
They felt the timbers crack.
But when they turned their faces,
And on the farther shore
Saw brave Horatius stand alone,
They would have crossed once more.

But with a crash like thunder
Fell every loosened beam,
And, like a dam, the mighty wreck
Lay right athwart the stream.
And a long shout of triumph
Rose from the walls of Rome,
As to the highest turret-tops
Was splashed the yellow foam.

And, like a horse unbroken
When first he feels the rein,
The furious river struggled hard,
And tossed his tawny mane,

And burst the curb, and bounded,
Rejoicing to be free;
And whirling down, in fierce career,
Battlement, and plank, and pier,
Rushed headlong to the sea.

Alone stood brave Horatius,
But constant still in mind;
Thrice thirty thousand foes before,
And the broad flood behind.
"Down with him!" cried false Sextus,
With a smile on his pale face.
"Now yield thee," cried Lars Porsena,
"Now yield thee to our grace."

Round turned he, as not deigning
Those craven ranks to see;
Naught spake he to Lars Porsena,
To Sextus naught spake he;
But he saw on Palatinus
The white porch of his home;
And he spake to the noble river
That rolls by the towers of Rome.

"Oh, Tiber! father Tiber!
To whom the Romans pray,
A Roman's life, a Roman's arms,
Take thou in charge this day!"
So he spake, and speaking sheathed
The good sword by his side,
And with his harness on his back,
Plunged headlong in the tide.

No sound of joy or sorrow
Was heard from either bank;

But friends and foes in dumb surprise,
With parted lips and straining eyes,
  Stood gazing where he sank;
And when above the surges
  They saw his crest appear,
All Rome sent forth a rapturous cry,
And even the ranks of Tuscany
  Could scarce forbear to cheer.

But fiercely ran the current,
  Swollen high by months of rain:
And fast his blood was flowing;
  And he was sore in pain,
And heavy with his armour,
  And spent with changing blows;
And oft they thought him sinking,
  But still again he rose.

Never, I ween, did swimmer,
  In such an evil case,
Struggle through such a raging flood
  Safe to the landing place:
But his limbs were borne up bravely
  By the brave heart within,
And our good father Tiber
  Bare bravely up his chin.

"Curse on him!" quoth false Sextus;
  "Will not the villain drown?
But for this stay, ere close of day
  We should have sacked the town!"
"Heaven help him!" quoth Lars Porsena,
  "And bring him safe to shore;
For such a gallant feat of arms
  Was never seen before."

And now he feels the bottom;
Now on dry earth he stands;
Now round him throng the Fathers
To press his gory hands;
And now with shouts and clapping,
And noise of weeping loud,
He enters through the River-Gate,
Borne by the joyous crowd.

They gave him of the corn-land,
That was of public right,
As much as two strong oxen
Could plough from morn till night;
And they made a molten image,
And set it up on high,
And there it stands unto this day
To witness if I lie.

It stands in the Comitium,
Plain for all folk to see;
Horatius in his harness,
Halting upon one knee:
And underneath is written,
In letters all of gold,
How valiantly he kept the bridge
In the brave days of old.

And still his name sounds stirring
Unto the men of Rome,
As the trumpet-blast that cries to them
To charge the Volscian home;
And wives still pray to Juno
For boys with hearts as bold
As his who kept the bridge so well
In the brave days of old.

And in the nights of winter,
When the cold north winds blow,
And the long howling of the wolves
Is heard amidst the snow;
When round the lonely cottage
Roars loud the tempest's din,
And the good logs of Algidus
Roar louder yet within;

When the oldest cask is opened,
And the largest lamp is lit;
When the chestnuts glow in the embers,
And the kid turns on the spit;
When young and old in circle
Around the firebrands close;
When the girls are weaving baskets,
And the lads are shaping bows;

When the goodman mends his armour,
And trims his helmet's plume;
When the goodwife's shuttle merrily
Goes flashing through the loom;
With weeping and with laughter
Still is the story told,
How well Horatius kept the bridge
In the brave days of old.

LORD MACAULAY

The Bull-Fight of Gazul

KING ALMANZOR of Granada, he hath bid the trumpet sound,
He hath summoned all the Moorish lords, from the hills and plains around ;
From Vega and Sierra, from Betis and Xenil,
They have come with helm and cuirass of gold and twisted steel.

Tis the holy Baptist's feast they hold in royalty and state,
And they have closed the spacious lists, beside the Alhambra's gate ;
In gowns of black and silver laced, within the tented ring,
Eight Moors to fight the bull are placed in presence of the King.

Eight Moorish lords of valour tried, with stalwart arm and true,
The onset of the beasts abide, as they come rushing through ;
The deeds they've done, the spoils they've won, fill all with hope and trust,
Yet ere high in heaven appears the sun, they all have bit the dust.

Then sounds the trumpet clearly, then clangs the loud tambour,
Make room, make room for Gazul—throw wide, throw wide the door ;—
Blow, blow the trumpet clearer still, more loudly strike the drum,
The Alcaydé of Algava to fight the bull doth come.

And first before the King he passed, with reverence
stooping low,
And next he bowed him to the Queen, and the
Infantas all a-row;
Then to his lady's grace he turned, and she to him
did throw
A scarf from out her balcony was whiter than the
snow.

With the life-blood of the slaughtered lords all
slippery is the sand,
Yet proudly in the centre hath Gazul ta'en his
stand;
And ladies look with heaving breast, and lords
with anxious eye,
But firmly he extends his arm,—his look is calm
and high.

Three bulls against the knight are loosed, and two
come roaring on,
He rises high in stirrup, forth stretching his rejón[1];
Each furious beast upon the breast he deals him
such a blow,
He blindly totters and gives back, across the sand
to go.

"Turn, Gazul, turn," the people cry—the third
comes up behind,
Low to the sand his head holds he, his nostrils
snuff the wind;—
The mountaineers that lead the steers, without
stand whispering low,
"Now thinks this proud Alcaydé to stun Harpado
so?"—

[1] *Rejón*, a lance.

From Guadiana comes he not, he comes not from Xenil,
From Guadalarif of the plain, or Barves of the hill;
But where from out the forest burst Xarama's waters clear,
Beneath the oak trees was he nursed, this proud and stately steer.

Dark is his hide on either side, but the blood within doth boil,
And the dun hide glows, as if on fire, as he paws to the turmoil.
His eyes are jet, and they are set in crystal rings of snow;
But now they stare with one red glare of brass upon the foe.

Upon the forehead of the bull the horns stand close and near,
From out the broad and wrinkled skull, like daggers they appear;
His neck is massy like the trunk of some old knotted tree,
Whereon the monster's shaggy mane, like billows curled, ye see.

His legs are short, his hams are thick, his hoofs are black as night,
Like a strong flail he holds his tail in fierceness of his might;
Like something molten out of iron, or hewn from forth the rock,
Harpado of Xarama stands, to bide the Alcaydé's shock.

Now stops the drum—close, close they come—
thrice meet, and thrice give back;
The white foam of Harpado lies on the charger's
breast of black—
The white foam of the charger on Harpado's
front of dun—
Once more advance upon his lance—once more,
thou fearless one!

Once more, once more;—in dust and gore to ruin
must thou reel—
In vain, in vain thou tearest the sand with furious
heel—
In vain, in vain, thou noble beast, I see, I see thee
stagger,
Now keen and cold thy neck must hold the stern
Alcaydé's dagger!

They have slipped a noose around his feet, six
horses are brought in,
And away they drag Harpado with a loud and
joyful din,—
Now stoop thee, lady, from thy stand and the ring
of price bestow
Upon Gazul of Algava, that hath laid Harpado low.

J. G. LOCKHART

Albama

THE Moorish King rides up and down,
Through Granada's royal town;
From Elvira's gates to those
Of Bivarambla on he goes.
Woe is me, Alhama!

Letters to the monarch tell
How Alhama's city fell:
In the fire the scroll he threw,
And the messenger he slew.
Woe is me Alhama!

He quits his mule, and mounts his horse,
And through the street directs his course;
Through the street of Zacatin
To the Alhambra spurring in.
Woe is me, Alhama!

When the Alhambra walls he gained,
On the moment he ordained
That the trumpet straight should sound
With the silver clarion round.
Woe is me, Alhama!

And when the hollow drums of war
Beat the loud alarm afar,
That the Moors of town and plain
Might answer to the martial strain—
Woe is me, Alhama!

Then the Moors, by this aware,
That bloody Mars recalled them there,
One by one, and two by two,
To a mighty squadron grew.
Woe is me, Alhama!

Out then spake an agèd Moor
In these words the king before,
"Wherefore call on us, O King?
What may mean this gathering?"
Woe is me, Alhama!

"Friends! ye have, alas! to know
Of a most disastrous blow;
That the Christians, stern and bold,
Have obtained Alhama's hold."
Woe is me, Alhama!

Out then spake old Alfaqui,
With his beard so white to see:
"Good King! thou art justly served,
Good King! this thou hast deserved.
Woe is me, Alhama!

"By thee were slain, in evil hour,
The Abencerrage, Granada's flower;
And strangers were received by thee
Of Cordova the Chivalry.
Woe is me, Alhama!

"And for this, O King! is sent
On thee a double chastisement:
Thee and thine, thy crown and realm,
One last wreck shall overwhelm.
Woe is me, Alhama!

"He who holds no laws in awe,
He must perish by the law;
And Granada must be won,
And thyself with her undone."
Woe is me, Alhama!

Fire flashed from out the old Moor's eyes,
The monarch's wrath began to rise,
Because he answered, and because
He spake exceeding well of laws.
Woe is me, Alhama!

"There is no law to say such things
As may disgust the ear of kings":
Thus, snorting with his choler, said
The Moorish King, and doomed him dead.
Woe is me, Alhama!

Moor Alfaqui! Moor Alfaqui!
Though thy beard so hoary be,
The King hath sent to have thee seized,
For Alhama's loss displeased.
Woe is me, Alhama!

And to fix thy head upon
High Alhambra's loftiest stone;
That this for thee should be the law,
And others tremble when they saw.
Woe is me, Alhama!

"Cavalier, and man of worth!
Let these words of mine go forth!
Let the Moorish Monarch know,
That to him I nothing owe.
Woe is me, Alhama!

"But on my soul Alhama weighs,
And on my inmost spirit preys;
And if the King his land hath lost,
Yet others may have lost the most.
Woe is me, Alhama!

"Sires have lost their children, wives
Their lords, and valiant men their lives!
One what best his love might claim
Hath lost, another wealth, or fame.
Woe is me, Alhama!

"I lost a damsel in that hour,
Of all the land the loveliest flower;
Doubloons a hundred I would pay,
And think her ransom cheap that day."
Woe is me, Alhama!

And as these things the old Moor said,
They severed from the trunk his head;
And to the Alhambra's wall with speed
'Twas carried, as the King decreed.
Woe is me, Alhama!

And men and infants therein weep
Their loss, so heavy and so deep;
Granada's ladies, all she rears
Within her walls, burst into tears.
Woe is me, Alhama!

And from the windows o'er the walls
The sable web of mourning falls;
The King weeps as a woman o'er
His loss, for it is much and sore.
Woe is me, Alhama!

LORD BYRON

The Dying of Tanneguy du Bois

YEA, I am passed away, I think, from this:
Nor helps me herb, nor any leechcraft here;
But lift me hither the sweet cross to kiss,
And witness ye, I go without a fear.
Yea, I am sped, and never more shall see,
As once I dreamed, the show of shield and crest
Gone southward to the fighting by the sea;—
There is no bird in any last year's nest!

Yea, with me now all dreams are done, I ween,
Grown faint and unremembered; voices call
High up, like misty warders dimly seen
Moving at morn on some Burgundian wall;
And all things swim—as when the charger stands
Quivering between the knees, and East and West
Are filled with flash of scarves and waving hands:—
There is no bird in any last year's nest!

Is she a dream I left in Aquitaine?—
My wife Giselle,—who never spoke a word,
Although I knew her mouth was drawn with pain,
Her eyelids hung with tears; and though I heard
The strong sob shake her throat, and saw the cord
Her necklace made about it;—she that prest
To watch me trotting till I reached the ford;—
There is no bird in any last year's nest!

Ah! I had hoped, God wot,—had longed that she
Should watch me from the little-lit tourelle,
Me, coming riding by the windy lea—
Me, coming back again to her, Giselle;

Yea, I had hoped once more to hear him call,
The curly-pate, who, rushen lance in rest,
Stormed at the lilies by the orchard wall;—
There is no bird in any last year's nest!

But how, my Masters, ye are wrapt in gloom!
This Death will come, and whom he loves he cleaves
Sheer through the steel and leather; hating whom
He smites in shameful wise behind the greaves.
'Tis a fair time with Dennis and the Saints,
And weary work to age, and want for rest,
When harness groweth heavy, and one faints,
With no bird left in any last year's nest!

Give ye good hap, then, all. For me, I lie
Broken in Christ's sweet hand, with whom shall rest
To keep me living, now that I must die;—
There is no bird in any last year's nest!

AUSTIN DOBSON

Fontenoy, 1745

I.—Before the Battle: Night

O H bad the march, the weary march, beneath these alien skies!—
But good the night, the friendly night, that soothes our tired eyes.
And bad the war, the tedious war, that keeps us sweltering here,
But good the hour, the friendly hour, that brings the battle near,

That brings us on the battle, that summons to their share
The homeless troops, the banished men, the exiled sons of Clare.

Oh little Corca Bascinn, the wild, the bleak, the fair!
Oh little stony pastures whose flowers are sweet, if rare!
Oh rough and rude Atlantic, the thunderous, the wide,
Whose kiss is like a soldier's kiss which will not be denied!
The whole night long we dream of you, and waking think we're there,—
Vain dream, and foolish waking, we never shall see Clare.

The wind is wild to-night, there's battle in the air;
The wind is in the west, and it seems to blow from Clare.
Have you nothing, nothing for us, loud brawler of the night?
No news to warm our heart-strings, to speed us through the fight?
In this hollow, star-pricked darkness, as in the sun's hot glare,
In sun-tide, moon-tide, star-tide, we thirst, we starve for Clare!

Hark! yonder through the darkness one distant rat-tat-tat!
The old foe stirs out there, God bless his soul for that!

The old foe musters strongly, he's coming on at last,
And Clare's Brigade may claim its own wherever blows fall fast.
Send us, ye western breezes, our full, our rightful share,
For Faith, and Fame, and Honour, and the ruined hearths of Clare.

2.—After the Battle: Early Dawn, Clare Coast

"*Mary mother, shield us! Say, what men are ye,*
Sweeping past so swiftly on this morning sea?"
"Without sails or rowlocks merrily we glide
Home to Corca Bascinn on the brimming tide."

"*Jesus save you, gentry! why are ye so white,*
Sitting all so straight and still in this misty light?"
"Nothing ails us, brother; joyous souls are we
Sailing home together, on the morning sea."

"Cousins, friends, and kinsfolk, children of the land,
Here we come together, a merry rousing band;
Sailing home together from the last great fight,
Home to Clare from Fontenoy, in the morning light.

"Men of Corca Bascinn, men of Clare's Brigade,
Hearken, stony hills of Clare, hear the charge we made;
See us come together, singing from the fight,
Home to Corca Bascinn, in the morning light."

E. LAWLESS

The Crossing of the Till

Tweed said to Till:
"What gars ye rin sae still?"
Till said tae Tweed:
"Though ye rin wi' speed,
An' I rin slaw—
Where ye droon ae man
I droon twa."

AT mirk midnight they mounted wi' speed,
Bound to cross the water of Tweed,
Riding southward by moss and shaw,—
Elliots three that were good at need.—
Tweed droons ae man, Till droons twa.

Lady Maude dwells on Cheviot-side;
Her castle is stately, her lands are wide—
But her face is the fairest thing of a',—
To which of the three shall she be bride?
Tweed droons ae man, Till droons twa.

Their tryst was at noon on the Lily Lea—
Walter and Jock from West Crosbie,
And Gilbert that dwelt by the Kidshielhaugh,
And she was to choose betwixt the three.
Tweed droons ae man, Till droons twa.

Though the Lady Maude be fair to see,
Twined for her sake shall true hearts be
Whose love hath dwelt without stain or flaw?
They've ta'en an oath wi' their clasped hands three.—
Tweed droons ae man, Till droons twa.

The Crossing of the Till

They stood by Tweed ere the dawn began,
Swift and soughing the waters ran—
  Light laughed Gilbert of Kidshielhaugh,—
"They say the river maun hae his man—
  But though Tweed get ane, we'll yet have twa!"

'Twas three from the Scottish bank did ride,—
The drumly waters were deep and wide;
  The snows were melting on Bodsbecklaw,—
'Twas two that won to the farther side.
  Tweed droons ae man, Till droons twa.

Two are saved though one be lost,—
And the wind is bitter with yielding frost,
  And the lift is black with the sleet to fa'—
And it's many a mile ere Till be crossed:
  Tweed droons ae man, Till droons twa.

"Jock, 'tis an ill night's tryst we ride,—
I doubt we'll never see Cheviot-side.
  Till runs deep wi' the melting snaw,—
The mosses are flooded; the moors are wide!"—
  And Tweed droons ae man, Till droons twa.

"Now that Tweed has had his will,
Never fear for the crossing of Till—
  Till that rins sae canny and slaw!"
Out spake Jock of the Crosbie Hill—
  But Tweed droons ae man, Till droons twa.

"Tweed hath ta'en, and Till shall take—
Brother, clasp hands for our old love's sake,
  Or Till cast keevils betwixt us twa!
Which of the twain shall be maiden's maik?"
  But Tweed droons ae man, Till droons twa!

The Crossing of the Till

Over the tops of the sedges rank
Till was swirling from brae to bank
  Smooth and white wi' the melting snaw.
Up to the shoulders the good grey sank.
  Tweed droons ae man, Till droons twa.

Wat's red roan was in by his side,
Neck and neck they breasted the tide,
  The pale sunrise in the east they saw;—
They'll win the bank with another stride.
  But Tweed droons ae man, Till droons twa.

Chill and bitter the waters rolled—
Jock is swept from his saddle-hold—
  "Wat, it's thou for the bride and a'!"
But the red roan plunged wi' the cramp o' the cold—
  Tweed droons ae man, Till droons twa.

Swept down stream like a leaf from the tree,
Swept on the Till to the Tweed and the sea,
  They caught and they clung in the stark deid-thraw,
And Maude shall be bride to nane o' the three.
  Tweed droons ae man, Till droons twa.

Twa deid men clasped breast to breast
Till's wan water washed to their rest;
  Last o' the Elliots o' Crosbie Ha'!
The kelpie keepeth the bravest and best.
  Tweed droons ae man, Till droons twa.

A. WERNER

Shameful Death

THERE were four of us about that bed;
The mass-priest knelt at the side,
I and his mother stood at the head,
Over his feet lay the bride;
We were quite sure that he was dead,
Though his eyes were open wide.

He did not die in the night,
He did not die in the day,
But in the morning twilight
His spirit passed away,
When neither sun nor moon was bright,
And the trees were merely grey.

He was not slain with the sword,
Knight's axe, or the knightly spear,
Yet spoke he never a word
After he came in here;
I cut away the cord
From the neck of my brother dear.

He did not strike one blow,
For the recreants came behind,
In a place where the hornbeams grow,
A path right hard to find,
For the hornbeam boughs swing so,
That the twilight makes it blind.

They lighted a great torch then,
When his arms were pinioned fast,
Sir John the knight of the Fen,
Sir Guy of the Dolorous Blast,
With knights threescore and ten,
Hung brave Lord Hugh at last.

I am threescore and ten,
And my hair is all turned grey,
But I met Sir John of the Fen
Long ago on a summer day,
And am glad to think of the moment when
I took his life away.

I am threescore and ten,
And my strength is mostly passed,
But long ago I and my men,
When the sky was overcast,
And the smoke rolled over the reeds of the fen,
Slew Guy of the Dolorous Blast.

And now, knights all of you,
I pray you pray for Sir Hugh,
A good knight and a true,
And for Alice, his wife, pray too.

WILLIAM MORRIS

Kallundborg Church

"BUILD at Kallundborg by the sea
A church as stately as church may be,
And there shalt thou wed my daughter fair,"
Said the Lord of Nesvek to Esbern Snare.

And the Baron laughed. But Esbern said,
"Though I lose my soul, I will Helva wed!"
And off he strode, in his pride of will,
To the Troll who dwelt in Ulshoi hill.

Kallundborg Church

"Build, O Troll, a church for me
At Kallundborg by the mighty sea;
Build it stately and build it fair,
Build it quickly," said Esbern Snare.

But the sly Dwarf said, "No work is wrought
By Trolls of the Hills, O man, for naught.
What wilt thou give for thy church so fair?"
"Set thine own price," quoth Esbern Snare.

"When Kallundborg church is builded well,
Thou must the name of its builder tell,
Or thy heart and thy eyes must be my boon."
"Build," said Esbern, "and build it soon."

By night and by day the Troll wrought on;
He hewed the timbers, he piled the stone;
But day by day, as the walls rose fair,
Darker and sadder grew Esbern Snare.

Of his evil bargain far and wide
A rumour ran through the country-side;
And Helva of Nesvek, young and fair,
Prayed for the soul of Esbern Snare.

And now the church was well-nigh done;
One pillar it lacked, and one alone;
And the grim Troll muttered, "Fool thou art!
To-morrow gives me thy eyes and heart!"

By Kallundborg in black despair,
Through wood and meadow, walked Esbern Snare,
Till, worn and weary, the strong man sank
Under the birches on Ulshoi bank.

At his last day's work he heard the Troll
Hammer and delve in the quarry's hole;
Before him the church stood large and fair;
"I have builded my tomb," said Esbern Snare.

And he closed his eyes the sight to hide,
When he heard a light step at his side:
"O Esbern Snare!" a sweet voice said,
"Would I might die now in thy stead!"

With a grasp by love and by fear made strong,
He held her fast, and he held her long;
With the beating heart of a bird afeard,
She hid her face in his flame-red beard.

"O Love!" he cried, "let me look to-day
In thine eyes, ere mine are plucked away;
Let me hold thee close, let me feel thy heart,
Ere mine by the Troll is torn apart!

"I sinned, O Helva, for love of thee!
Pray that the Lord Christ pardon me!"
But fast as she prayed, and faster still,
Hammered the Troll in Ulshoi hill.

He knew, as he wrought, that a loving heart
Was somehow baffling his evil art;
For more than spell of Elf or Troll
Is a maiden's prayer for her lover's soul.

And Esbern listened, and caught the sound
Of a Troll-wife singing underground:
"To-morrow comes Finé, father thine;
Lie still and hush thee, baby mine!

"Lie still, my darling! next sunrise
Thou'lt play with Esbern Snare's heart and eyes!"

"Ho! ho!" quoth Esbern, "is that your game?
Thanks to the Troll-wife, I know his name!"

The Troll he heard him, and hurried on
To Kallundborg church with the lacking stone.
"Too late, Gaffer Finé!" cried Esbern Snare;
And Troll and pillar vanished in air!

That night the harvesters heard the sound
Of a woman sobbing underground,
And the voice of the Hill-Troll loud with blame
Of the careless singer who told his name.

Of the Troll of the Church they sing the rune
By the Northern Sea in the harvest moon;
And the fishers of Zealand hear him still
Scolding his wife in Ulshoi hill.

And seaward over its groves of birch
Still looks the tower of Kallundborg church,
Where, first at its altar, a wedded pair,
Stood Helva of Nesvek and Esbern Snare!

J. G. WHITTIER

Earl Haldan's Daughter

IT was Earl Haldan's daughter,
She looked across the sea;
She looked across the water;
And long and loud laughed she:
"The locks of six princesses
Must be my marriage fee,
So hey bonny boat, and ho bonny boat!
Who comes a-wooing me?"

It was Earl Haldan's daughter,
She walked along the sand;
When she was aware of a knight so fair,
Came sailing to the land.
His sails were all of velvet,
His mast of beaten gold,
And "Hey bonny boat, and ho bonny boat!
Who saileth here so bold?"

"The locks of five princesses
I won beyond the sea;
I clipt their golden tresses,
To fringe a cloak for thee.
One handful yet is wanting,
But one of all the tale;
So hey bonny boat, and ho bonny boat!
Furl up thy velvet sail!"

He leapt into the water,
That rover young and bold;
He gript Earl Haldan's daughter,
He clipt her locks of gold:
"Go weep, go weep, proud maiden,
The tale is full to-day.
Now hey bonny boat, and ho bonny boat!
Sail westward ho! away!"

CHARLES KINGSLEY

Keith of Ravelston

THE murmur of the mourning ghost
That keeps the shadowy kine,
"Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line!"

Ravelston, Ravelston,
The merry path that leads
Down the golden morning hill,
And thro' the silver meads;

Ravelston, Ravelston,
The stile beneath the tree,
The maid that kept her mother's kine,
The song that sang she!

She sang her song, she kept her kine,
She sat beneath the thorn
When Andrew Keith of Ravelston
Rode thro' the Monday morn.

His henchmen sing, his hawk-bells ring,
His belted jewels shine!
Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line!

Year after year, where Andrew came,
Comes evening down the glade,
And still there sits a moonshine ghost
Where sat the sunshine maid.

Her misty hair is faint and fair,
She keeps her shadowy kine;
Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line!

I lay my hand upon the stile,
The stile is lone and cold,
The burnie that goes babbling by
Says naught that can be told.

Yet, stranger! here, from year to year,
She keeps her shadowy kine;
Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line!

Step out three steps, where Andrew stood—
Why blanch thy cheeks for fear?
The ancient stile is not alone,
'Tis not the burn I hear!

She makes her immemorial moan,
She keeps her shadowy kine;
Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line!

SYDNEY DOBELL

Barthram's Dirge

THEY shot him dead at the Nine-Stane Rig,
Beside the Headless Cross;
And they left him lying in his blood,
Upon the moor and moss.

They made a bier of the broken bough,
The sauch[1] and the aspin gray,
And they bore him to the Lady Chapel
And waked him there all day.

A lady came to that lonely bower,
And threw her robes aside;
She tore her ling-long yellow hair,
And knelt at Barthram's side.

[1] *Sauch*, willow

She bathed him in the Lady-Well—
His wounds so deep and sair,
And she plaited a garland for his breast,
And a garland for his hair.

They rowed him in a lily sheet,
And bare him to his earth,
And the Gray Friars sung the dead man's mass,
As they passed the chapel garth.

They buried him at the mirk midnight,
When the dew fell cold and still,
When the aspin gray forgot to play,
And the mist clung to the hill.

They dug his grave but a bare foot deep,
By the edge of the Nine-Stane Burn,
And they covered him o'er with the heather flower,
The moss, and the lady-fern.

A gray friar staid upon the grave,
And sang till the morning tide;
And a friar shall sing for Barthram's soul,
While the Headless Cross shall bide.

ROBERT SURTEES

The Twa Corbies

AS I was walking all alane,
I heard twa corbies[1] making a mane;
The tane unto the t'other say,
"Where sall we gang and dine to-day?"

[1] *Corbies*, crows.

"In behint yon auld fail[1] dyke,
I wot there lies a new slain knight;
And naebody kens that he lies there,
But his hawk, his hound, and lady fair.

"His hound is to the hunting gane,
His hawk, to fetch the wild-fowl hame,
His lady's ta'en another mate,
Sae we may mak our dinner sweet.

"Ye'll sit on his white hause-bane,[2]
And I'll pick out his bonny blue een:
Wi' ae lock o' his gowden hair,
We'll theek[3] our nest when it grows bare.

"Mony a ane for him makes mane,
But nane sall ken where he is gane;
O'er his white banes, when they are bare,
The wind sall blaw for evermair."

Proud Maisie

PROUD Maisie is in the wood,
Walking so early;
Sweet Robin sits on the bush,
Singing so rarely.

"Tell me, thou bonny bird,
When shall I marry me?"
—"When six braw gentlemen
Kirkward shall carry ye."

[1] *Fail*, turf. [2] *Hause*, neck. [3] *Theek*, thatch.

"Who makes the bridal bed,
Birdie, say truly?"
—"The gray-headed sexton
That delves the grave duly.

"The glow-worm o'er grave and stone
Shall light thee steady;
The owl from the steeple sing
Welcome, proud lady."

SIR WALTER SCOTT

Jock of Hazeldean

"WHY weep ye by the tide, ladie?
Why weep ye by the tide?
I'll wed ye to my youngest son,
And ye sall be his bride:
And ye sall be his bride, ladie,
Sae comely to be seen"—
But aye she loot the tears down fa'
For Jock of Hazeldean.

"Now let this wilfu' grief be done,
And dry that cheek sae pale;
Young Frank is chief of Errington,
And lord of Langley-dale;
His step is first in peacefu' ha',
His sword in battle keen"—
But aye she loot the tears down fa'
For Jock of Hazeldean.

"A chain of gold ye sall not lack,
Nor braid to bind your hair;

Nor mettled hound, nor managed hawk,
  Nor palfrey fresh and fair;
And you, the foremost o' them a',
  Shall ride our forest queen"—
But aye she loot the tears down fa'
  For Jock of Hazeldean.

The kirk was decked at morning-tide,
  The tapers glimmered fair;
The priest and bridegroom wait the bride,
  And dame and knight are there.
They sought her baith by bower and ha';
  The ladie was not seen!—
She's o'er the Border, and awa'
  Wi' Jock of Hazeldean.

SIR WALTER SCOTT

Glenallan's Earl

NOW haud your tongue, baith wife and carle,
  And listen, great and sma',
And I will sing of Glenallan's Earl
  That fought on the red Harlaw.

The cronach's cried on Bennachie,
  And doun the Don and a',
And Hieland and Lowland may mournfu' be
  For the sair field of Harlaw.

They saddled a hundred milk-white steeds,
  They hae bridled a hundred black,
With a chafron of steel on each horse's head,
  And a good knight upon his back.

They hadna ridden a mile, a mile,
A mile but barely ten,
When Donald came branking down the brae
Wi' twenty thousand men.

Their tartans they were waving wide,
Their glaives were glancing clear;
The pibrochs rung frae side to side,
Would deafen you to hear.

The great Earl in his stirrups stood
That Highland host to see:
"Now, here a knight that's stout and good
May prove a jeopardie.

"What wouldst thou do, my squire so gay,
That rides beside my reyne,
Were ye Glenallan's Earl the day,
And I were Roland Cheyne?

"To turn the rein were sin and shame,
To fight were wondrous peril;
What would you do now, Roland Cheyne,
Were ye Glenallan's Earl?"

"Were I Glenallan's Earl, this tide,
And ye were Roland Cheyne,
The spur should be in my horse's side,
And the bridle upon his mane.

"If they hae twenty thousand blades,
And we twice ten times ten;
Yet they hae but their tartan plaids,
And we are mail-clad men.

My horse shall ride through ranks sae rude,
As through the moorland fern;
Then ne'er let the gentle Norman blude
Grow cauld for Highland kerne."

SIR WALTER SCOTT

Brave Lord Willoughby

THE fifteenth day of July,
With glistering spear and shield,
A famous fight in Flanders
Was foughten in the field:
The most courageous officers
Were English captains three;
But the bravest man in battle
Was brave Lord Willoughby.

The next was Captain Norris,
A valiant man was he;
The other, Captain Turner,
From field would never flee.
With fifteen hundred fighting men,
Alas! there were no more,
They fought with fourteen thousand then,
Upon the bloody shore.

"Stand to it, noble pikemen,
And look you round about:
And shoot you right, you bow-men,
And we will keep them out:

You musket and caliver men,
Do you prove true to me:
I'll be the foremost man in fight,"
Says brave Lord Willoughby.

And then the bloody enemy
They fiercely did assail,
And fought it out most furiously,
Not doubting to prevail:
The wounded men on both sides fell,
Most piteous for to see,
Yet nothing could the courage quell
Of brave Lord Willoughby.

For seven hours, to all men's view,
This fight endurèd sore,
Until our men so feeble grew
That they could fight no more;
And then upon dead horses
Full savourly they eat,
And drank the puddle water,
They could no better get.

When they had fed so freely,
They kneelèd on the ground,
And praisèd God devoutly
For the favour they had found;
And beating up their colours,
The fight they did renew,
And turning tow'rds the Spaniard,
A thousand more they slew.

The sharp steel-pointed arrows
And bullets thick did fly;
Then did our valiant soldiers
Charge on most furiously;

Which made the Spaniards waver,
They thought it best to flee;
They feared the stout behaviour
Of brave Lord Willoughby.

Then quoth the Spanish general,
"Come, let us march away;
I fear we shall be spoilèd all
If here we longer stay;
For yonder comes Lord Willoughby,
With courage fierce and fell;
He will not give one inch of way
For all the devils in hell."

And then the fearful enemy
Was quickly put to flight,
Our men pursued courageously,
And caught their forces quite;
But at the last they gave a shout,
Which echoed through the sky;
"God and St George for England!"
The conquerors did cry.

This news was brought to England
With all the speed might be,
And soon our gracious queen was told
Of this same victory.
"O this is brave Lord Willoughby,
My love that ever won;
Of all the lords of honour
'Tis he great deeds hath done."

To the soldiers that were maimèd
And wounded in the fray,
The queen allowed a pension
Of fifteen pence a day;

And from all costs and charges
She quit and set them free:
And this she did all for the sake
Of brave Lord Willoughby.

Then courage, noble Englishmen,
And never be dismayed;
If that we be but one to ten,
We will not be afraid
To fight with foreign enemies,
And set our nation free:
And thus I end the bloody bout
Of brave Lord Willoughby.

The Bailiff's Daughter of Islington

THERE was a youth, and a well-belovèd youth,
And he was a squire's son:
He loved the bailiff's daughter dear,
That lived in Islington.

Yet she was coy, and would not believe
That he did love her so;
No, nor at any time would she
Any countenance to him show.

But when his friends did understand
His fond and foolish mind,
They sent him up to fair London,
An apprentice for to bind.

And when he had been seven long years,
And never his love could see;
"Many a tear have I shed for her sake,
When she little thought of me."

Then all the maids of Islington
Went forth to sport and play,
All but the bailiff's daughter dear;
She secretly stole away.

She pullèd off her gown of green,
And put on ragged attire,
And to fair London she would go
Her true love to enquire.

And as she went along the high road,
The weather being hot and dry,
She sat her down upon a green bank,
And her true love came riding by.

She started up, with a colour so red,
Catching hold of his bridle-rein;
"One penny, one penny, kind sir," she said,
"Will ease me of much pain."

"Before I give you one penny, sweetheart,
Pray tell me where you were born."
"At Islington, kind sir," said she,
"Where I have had many a scorn."

"I prythee, sweetheart, then tell to me,
O tell me, whether you know
The bailiff's daughter of Islington."
"She is dead, sir, long ago."

"If she be dead, then take my horse,
My saddle and bridle also;
For I will unto some far country,
Where no man shall me know."

"O stay, O stay, thou goodly youth,
She standeth by thy side;
She is here alive,—she is not dead,—
And ready to be thy bride."

"O farewell grief, and welcome joy,
Ten thousand times therefore;
For now I have found mine own true love,
Whom I thought I should never see more."

Barbara Allen

ALL in the merry month of May,
When green buds they were swelling,
Young Jemmy Grove on his death-bed lay
For love of Barbara Allen.

He sent his man down through the town,
To the place where she was dwelling:
"O haste and come to my master dear,
If you be Barbara Allen."

So slowly, slowly she came up,
And slowly she came nigh him;
And all she said, when there she came,
"Young man, I think you're dying."

"O it's I'm sick, and very, very sick,
And it's all for Barbara Allen."
"O the better for me ye'll never be,
Though your heart's blood were a-spilling."

"O do ye not mind, young man," said she,
"When ye the cups were filling,
That ye made the healths go round and round,
And slighted Barbara Allen?"

He turned his face unto the wall,
And death was with him dealing:
"Adieu, adieu, my dear friends all,
Be kind to Barbara Allen."

As she was walking o'er the fields,
She heard the bell a-knelling;
And every stroke did seem to say,
"Unworthy Barbara Allen!"

"O mother, mother, make my bed,
To lay me down in sorrow.
My love has died for me to-day,
I'll die for him to-morrow."

Lord Randal

"O WHERE hae ye been, Lord Randal, my son?
O where hae ye been, my handsome young man?"
"I hae been to the wild wood; mother, make my bed soon,
For I'm weary wi' hunting, and fain wad lie down."

"Where gat ye your dinner, Lord Randal, my son?
Where gat ye your dinner, my handsome young man?
I dined wi' my true-love; mother, make my bed soon,
For I'm weary wi' hunting, and fain wad lie down."

"What gat ye to your dinner, Lord Randal, my son?
What gat ye to your dinner, my handsome young man?"
"I gat eels boiled in broo; mother, make my bed soon,
For I'm weary wi' hunting, and fain wad lie down."

"What became of your bloodhounds, Lord Randal, my son?
What became of your bloodhounds, my handsome young man?"
"Oh, they swelled and they died; mother, make my bed soon,
For I'm weary wi' hunting and fain wad lie down."

"O I fear ye are poisoned, Lord Randal, my son!
O I fear ye are poisoned, my handsome young man!"
"O yes! I am poisoned; mother, make my bed soon,
For I'm sick at the heart, and I fain wad lie down."

The Lowlands of Holland

MY love he built a bonny ship, and set her on the sea,
Wi' seven score good mariners to bear her companie.
There's three score is sunk, and three score dead at sea,
And the Lowlands of Holland hae twined my love and me.

My love he built another ship, and set her on the main,
And nane but twenty mariners for to bring her hame;
But the weary wind began to rise, and the sea began to rout,
My love then and his bonny ship turned wither-shins about."

"There shall neither coif come on my head, nor kaim come in my hair,
There shall neither coal nor candlelight shine in my bower mair;
Nor will I love another ane until the day I dee,
For I never loved a love but ane, and he's drowned in the sea."

"O haud your tongue, my daughter dear, be still and be content;
There are mair lads in Galloway, ye needna sair lament."
"O there is nane in Galloway, there's nane at a' for me,
For I never loved a love but ane, and he's drowned in the sea."

Helen of Kirconnell

I WISH I were where Helen lies,
Night and day on me she cries;
O that I were where Helen lies,
On fair Kirconnell lea!

Curst be the heart that thought the thought,
And curst the hand that fired the shot,
When in my arms burd[1] Helen dropt,
And died to succour me!

O think na ye ma heart was sair,
When my love dropt down and spak nae mair!
There did she swoon wi' meikle care,
On fair Kirconnell lea.

As I went down the water-side,
None but my foe to be my guide,
None but my foe to be my guide,
On fair Kirconnell lea;

I lighted down my sword to draw,
I hackèd him in pieces sma',
I hackèd him in pieces sma',
For her sake that died for me.

O Helen fair, beyond compare!
I'll mak' a garland o' thy hair,
Shall bind my heart for evermair,
Until the day I dee!

O that I were where Helen lies!
Night and day on me she cries;
Out of my bed she bids me rise,
Says, "Haste, and come to me!"

O Helen fair! O Helen chaste!
If I were with thee, I were blest,
Where thou lies low and takes thy rest,
On fair Kirconnell lea.

[1] *Burd*, maid.

I wish my grave were growing green,
A winding-sheet drawn ower my e'en,
And I in Helen's arms lying,
On fair Kirconnell lea.

I wish I were where Helen lies!
Night and day on me she cries;
And I am weary of the skies,
For her sake that died for me.

The Dowie Dens of Yarrow

LATE at e'en, drinking the wine,
And ere they paid the lawing,[1]
They set a combat them between,
To fight it in the dawing.

"O stay at hame, my noble lord,
O stay at hame, my marrow!
My cruel brother will you betray
On the dowie houms of Yarrow."

"O fare ye weel, my lady gay!
O fare ye weel, my marrow!
For I maun gae, tho' I ne'er return
Frae the dowie banks of Yarrow."

She kissed his cheek, she kaimed his hair,
As oft she'd done before, O;
She belted him wi' his gude brand,
And he's away to Yarrow.

[1] *Lawing*, reckoning.

As he gaed up the Tennies bank,
I wot he gaed wi' sorrow,
Down in a den he spied nine armed men,
On the dowie houms of Yarrow.

"O come ye here to hunt or hawk,
As ye hae done before, O;
Or come ye here to wield your brand
On the dowie houms of Yarrow?"

"I come na here to hunt nor hawk,
As I hae done before, O;
But I come here to wield my brand.
On the bonnie banks of Yarrow."

Four he hurt, and five he slew,
On the dowie houms of Yarrow,
Till that stubborn knight came him behind,
And ran his body thorough.

"Gae hame, gae hame, gude-brother[1] John,
And tell your sister sorrow,—
To come and lift her leafu' lord,
He's sleeping sound on Yarrow."

As he gaed ower yon high, high hill,
As oft he'd done before, O;
There he met his sister dear,
Came rinnin' fast to Yarrow.

"Yestreen I dreamed a dolefu' dream,
I kent there wad be sorrow;
I dreamed I pu'd the heather green
On the dowie banks of Yarrow."

[1] *Gude brither*, brother-in-law.

"I'll read your dream, sister," he says,
"I'll read it into sorrow;
Ye're bidden gae take up your love,
He's sleeping sound on Yarrow."

She's torn the ribbons frae her head,
They were baith thick and narrow;
She's kilted up her green claithing,
And she's awa' to Yarrow.

She's ta'en him in her arms twa,
And gi'en him kisses thorough,
And wi' her tears she bathed his wounds
Upon the braes of Yarrow.

"Now haud your tongue, my daughter dear,
For a' this breeds but sorrow;
I'll wed ye to a better lord
Than him ye lost on Yarrow."

"O haud your tongue, my father dear,
Ye mind me but of sorrow;
A better lord there couldna be
Than him I lost on Yarrow."

She kissed his lips, she kaimed his hair,
As oft she'd done before, O;
Syne wi' a sigh her heart did break
On the dowie houms of Yarrow.

The Gay Goshawk

"O WELL is me, my gay goshawk,
Ye can baith speak and flee;
Ye sall carry a letter to my love,
Bring an answer back to me."

"But how sall I your true love find,
Or how suld I her knaw?
I bear a tongue ne'er wi' her spake,
An eye that ne'er her saw."

"O weel sall ye my true love ken,
Sae sune as ye her see;
For o' a' the flowers of fair England
The fairest flower is she.

"And even at my love's bower-door
There grows a flowering birk;
And ye maun sit and sing thereon
As she gangs to the kirk.

"And four-and-twenty fair ladies
Will to the mass repair;
But weel may ye my lady ken,
The fairest lady there."

Lord William has written a love-letter,
Put it under his pinion gray;
And he is awa' to Southern land,
As fast as wings can gae.

And even at the lady's bower
There grew a flowering birk;
And he sat down and sang thereon
As she gaed to the kirk.

And weel he kent that lady fair
Amang her maidens free;
For the flower that springs in May morning
Was not sae sweet as she.

And first he sang a low, low note,
And syne he sang a clear;
And aye the o'erword o' the sang
Was "Your love can no win here."

"Sing on, sing on, my bonnie bird,
The sang ye sung yestreen;
For weel I ken, by your sweet singing,
Ye hae my true love seen."

O first he sang a merry sang,
And syne he sang a grave;
And syne he picked his feathers gray,
To her the letter gave.

"Have there a letter from Lord William,
He says he's sent ye three;
He canna wait your love langer,
But for your sake he'll dee."

"I send him the rings from my white fingers,
The garlands off my hair;
I send him the heart that's in my breast;
What would my love have mair?
And at Mary's kirk in fair Scotland
Ye'll bid him meet me there."

She hied her to her father dear,
As fast as gang could she:

"A boon, a boon, my father dear,
A boon I beg of thee!"
"Ask not that haughty Scottish lord,
For him you ne'er shall see.

"But for your honest asking else,
Weel granted it shall be."
"Then, gin I die in Southern land,
In Scotland bury me.

"And the first kirk that ye come to,
Ye'll gar the mass be sung;
And the next kirk that ye come to,
Ye'll gar the bells be rung.

"And when ye come to St Mary's kirk,
Ye'll tarry there till night."
And so her father pledged his word,
And so his promise plight.

The lady's ta'en her to her bower,
As fast as she could fare;
And she has drunk a sleepy draught,
That she had mixed wi' care.

And pale, pale grew her rosy cheek,
And pale and cold was she;
She seemed to be as surely dead
As any one could be.

Then spake her cruel step-minnie,
"Tak ye the burning lead,
And drap a drap on her bosom
To try if she be dead."

They drapped the hot lead on her cheek
They drapped it on her chin,

They drapped it on her bosom white;
But she spake none again.

Then up arose her seven brethren,
And hewed to her a bier;
They hewed it frae the solid oak,
Laid it o'er wi' silver clear.

Then up and gat her seven sisters,
And sewed to her a kell[1];
And every steek that they put in
Sewed to a siller bell.

The first Scots kirk that they cam to,
They gart the bells be rung;
The next Scots kirk that they cam to,
They gart the mass be sung.

But when they cam to St Mary's kirk,
There stood spearmen in a raw;
And up and started Lord William,
The chieftain amang them a'.

"Set down, set down the bier," he said,
"Let me look her upon."
But as soon as Lord William touched her hand,
Her colour began to come.

She brightened like the lily flower,
Till her pale colour was gone;
With rosy cheek, and ruby lip,
She smiled her love upon.

"A morsel of your bread, my lord,
And one glass of your wine;
For I have fasted these three lang days,
All for your sake and mine."

[1] *Kell*, shroud.

The Heir of Linne

Part the First

LITHE[1] and listen, gentlemen;
To sing a song I will begin:
It is of a lord of fair Scotland,
Which was the unthrifty heir of Linne.

His father was a right good lord,
His mother a lady of high degree;
But they, alas! were dead, him fro,
And he loved keeping companie.

To spend the day with merry cheer,
To drink and revel every night,
To card and dice from eve to morn,
It was, I ween, his heart's delight.

To ride, to run, to rant, to roar,
To alway spend and never spare,
I wot, an he were the king himsel'
Of gold and fee he mote be bare.

So fares the unthrifty heir of Linne,
Till all his gold is gone and spent;
And he maun sell his lands so broad,
His house, and lands, and all his rent.

His father had a steward keen,
And John o' the Scales was callèd he:
But John is become a gentleman,
And John has got both gold and fee.

[1] *Lithe*, hearken, give ear.

Says, "Welcome, welcome, Lord of Linne,
Let naught disturb thy merry cheer;
If thou wilt sell thy lands so broad,
Good store of gold I'll give thee here."

"My gold is gone, my money is spent;
My land now take it unto thee;
Give me the gold, good John o' the Scales,
And thine for ay my land shall be."

Then John he did him to record draw,
And John he cast him a god's-pennie;[1]
But, for every pound that John agreed,
The land, I wis, was well worth three.

He told him the gold upon the board;
He was right glad his land to win:
"The gold is thine, the land is mine,
And now I'll be the Lord of Linne."

Thus he hath sold his land so broad;
Both hill and holt, and moor and fen,
All but a poor and lonesome lodge,
That stood far off in a lonely glen.

For so he to his father hight.
"My son, when I am gone," said he,
"Then thou wilt spend thy land so broad,
And thou wilt spend thy gold so free:

"But swear to me now upon the rood,
That lonesome lodge thou'lt never spend,
For when all the world doth frown on thee,
Thou there shalt find a faithful friend."

[1] *God's-pennie*, earnest money.

The heir of Linne is full of gold:
And, "Come with me, my friends," said he,
"Let's drink, and rant, and merry make,
And he that spares ne'er mote he thri'e."

They ranted, drank, and merry made,
Till all his gold it waxèd thin;
And then his friends they slunk away;
They left the unthrifty heir of Linne.

He had never a penny left in his purse,
Never a penny left but three;
And one was brass, another was lead,
And another it was the white monie.

"Now well-a-day!" said the heir of Linne,
"Now well-a-day, and woe is me!
For when I was the Lord of Linne,
I never wanted gold nor fee.

'But many a trusty friend have I,
And why should I feel dole or care?
I'll borrow of them all by turns,
So need I not be ever bare."

But one, I wis, was not at home;
Another had paid his gold away;
Another called him thriftless loon,
And sharply bade him wend his way.

"Now well-a-day!" said the heir of Linne,
"Now well-a-day, and woe is me!
For, when I had my land so broad,
On me they lived right merrilie.

"To beg my bread from door to door,
I wis, it were a burning shame:
To rob and steal it were a sin:
To work my limbs I cannot frame.

"Now I'll away to the lonesome lodge,
For there my father bade me wend;
When all the world should frown on me,
I there should find a trusty friend."

Part the Second

Away then hied the heir of Linne,
O'er hill and holt, and moor and fen,
Until he came to the lonesome lodge,
That stood so low in a lonely glen.

He lookèd up, he lookèd down,
In hope some comfort for to win;
But bare and lothely were the walls:
"Here's sorry cheer!" quoth the heir of Linne.

The little window, dim and dark,
Was hung with ivy, brier, and yew;
No shimmering sun here ever shone;
No halesome breeze here ever blew.

No chair, no table, he mote spy,
No cheerful hearth, no welcome bed,
Naught save a rope with running noose,
That dangling hung up o'er his head.

And over it, in letters broad,
These words were written so plain to see:
"Ah! graceless wretch, hast spent thine all,
And brought thyself to penurie?

"All this my boding mind misgave,
I therefore left this trusty friend:
Now let it shield thy foul disgrace,
And all thy shame and sorrows end."

Sorely shent[1] with this rebuke,
Sorely shent was the heir of Linne;
His heart, I wis, was near to brast
With guilt and sorrow, shame and sin.

Never a word spake the heir of Linne,
Never a word he spake but three:
"This is a trusty friend indeed,
And is right welcome unto me."

Then round his neck the cord he drew,
And sprang aloft with his bodie:
When lo! the ceiling burst in twain,
And to the ground came tumbling he,

Astonied lay the heir of Linne;
Nor knew if he were live or dead.
At length he looked and saw a bill,
And in it a key of gold so red.

He took the bill and looked it on;
Straight good comfort found he there:
It told him of a hole in the wall,
In which there stood three chests in-fere.[2]

Two were full of the beaten gold;
The third was full of white monie;
And over them, in broad letters,
These words were written so plain to see:

[1] *Shent*, shamed. [2] *In-fere*, together.

"Once more, my son, I set thee clear;
Amend thy life and follies past;
For but thou amend thee of thy life,
That rope must be thy end at last."

"And let it be," said the heir of Linne;
"And let it be, but if I amend:
For here I will make mine avow,
This rede[1] shall guide me to the end."

Away then went with a merry cheer,
Away then went the heir of Linne;
I wis he neither stint nor stayed
Till John o' the Scales' house he did win.

And when he came to John o' the Scales,
Up at the speere[2] then lookèd he:
There sat three lords upon a row,
Were drinking of the wine so free.

Then up bespake the heir of Linne;
To John o' the Scales then spake he:
"I pray thee now, good John o' the Scales,
One forty pence to lend to me."

"Away, away, thou thriftless loon!
Away, away! this may not be:
A curse be on my head," he said,
"If ever I trust thee one pennie!"

Then bespake the heir of Linne,
To John o' the Scales' wife then spake he:
"Madam, some alms on me bestow,
I pray, for sweet Saint Charitie."

[1] *Rede*, counsel.
[2] *Speere*, an aperture in the wall, a shot window.

"Away, away, thou thriftless loon!
I swear thou gettest no alms of me;
For if we should hang any losel here,
The first we would begin with thee."

Then up bespake a good fellow,
Which sat at John o' the Scales his board;
Said, "Turn again, thou heir of Linne;
Some time thou wast a right good lord.

"Some time a good fellow thou hast been,
And sparedst not thy gold and fee;
Therefore I'll lend thee forty pence,
And other forty if need there be.

"And ever I pray thee, John o' the Scales,
To let him sit in thy companie:
For well I wot thou hadst his land,
And a good bargain it was to thee."

Up then bespake him John o' the Scales,
All wud[1] he answered him again:
"A curse be on my head," he said,
"But I did lose by that bargain.

"And here I proffer thee, heir of Linne,
Before these lords so fair and free,
Thou shalt have't back again better cheap,
By a hundred merks, than I had it of thee."

"I draw you to record, lords," he said.
With that he cast him a god's-pennie:
"Now, by my fay," said the heir of Linne,
"And here, good John, is thy monie."

[1] *Wud*, furious.

And he pulled forth three bags of gold,
And laid them down upon the board:
All woe-begone was John o' the Scales,
So shent he could say never a word.

He told him forth the good red gold,
He told it forth with mickle din,
"The gold is thine; the land is mine;
And now I'm again the Lord of Linne!"

Says, "Have thou here, thou good fellow;
Forty pence thou didst lend me:
Now I'm again the Lord of Linne,
And forty pounds I will give thee."

"I'll make thee the keeper of my forest,
Both of the wild deer and the tame;
For but I reward thy bounteous heart,
I wis, good fellow, I were to blame."

"Now well-a-day!" saith Joan o' the Scales;
"Now well-a-day, and woe is my life!
Yesterday I was Lady of Linne,
Now I'm but John o' the Scales his wife."

"Now fare thee well," said the heir of Linne,
"Farewell now, John o' the Scales!" said he;
"When next I want to sell my land,
Good John o' the Scales, I'll come to thee."

The Beggar's Daughter of Bethnal Green

Part the First

IT was a blind beggar, had long lost his sight,
He had a fair daughter of beauty most bright;
And many a gallant brave suitor had she,
For none was so comely as pretty Bessee.

And though she was truly of favour most fair,
Yet seeing she was but a poor beggar's heir,
Of ancient housekeepers despisèd was she,
Whose sons came as suitors to pretty Bessee.

Wherefore in great sorrow fair Bessy did say,
"Good father, and mother, let me go away
To seek out my fortune, whatever it be."
This suit then they granted to pretty Bessee.

Then Bessy, that was of beauty so bright,
All clad in grey russet, and late in the night,
From father and mother alone parted she;
Who sighèd and sobbèd for pretty Bessee.

She went till she came into Stratford-le-Bow;
Then knew she not whither, nor which way to go:
With tears she lamented her hard destinie,
So sad and so heavy was pretty Bessee.

She kept on her journey until it was day,
And went unto Rumford along the highway;
Where at the Queen's Arms entertainèd was she:
So fair and well-favoured was pretty Bessee.

She had not been there a month to an end,
But master and mistress and all was her friend:
And every brave gallant, that once did her see,
Was straightway enamoured of pretty Bessee.

Great gifts they did send her of silver and gold,
And in their songs daily her love was extolled;
Her beauty was blazèd in every degree,
So fair and so comely was pretty Bessee.

The young men of Rumford in her had their joy;
She showed herself courteous, and modestly coy;
And at her commandèment still would they be;
So fair and so comely was pretty Bessee.

Four suitors at once unto her did go;
They cravèd her favour, but still she said no;
"I would not wish gentles to marry with me."
Yet ever they honourèd pretty Bessee.

The first of them was a gallant young knight,
And he came unto her disguised in the night:
The second a gentleman of good degree,
Who wooèd and suèd for pretty Bessee:

A merchant of London, whose wealth was not small,
He was the third suitor, and proper withal:
Her master's own son the fourth man must be,
Who swore he would die for pretty Bessee.

"And, if thou wilt marry with me," quoth the knight,
"I'll make thee a lady with joy and delight;
My heart's so enthrallèd by thy beautie,
That soon I shall die for pretty Bessee."

The gentleman said, "Come, marry with me,
As fine as a lady my Bessy shall be:
My life is distressèd: O hear me," quoth he;
"And grant me thy love, my pretty Bessee."

"Let me be thy husband," the merchant could say,
"Thou shalt live in London both gallant and gay;
My ships shall bring home rich jewels for thee,
And I will for ever love pretty Bessee."

Then Bessy she sighèd, and thus she did say,
"My father and mother I mean to obey;
First get their good will, and be faithful to me,
And you shall enjoy your pretty Bessee."

To every one this answer she made,
Wherefore unto her they joyfully said,
"This thing to fulfil we all do agree:
But where dwells thy father, my pretty Bessee?"

"My father," she said, "is soon to be seen:
The seely[1] blind beggar of Bethnal Green,
That daily sits begging for charitie,
He is the good father of pretty Bessee.

"His marks and his tokens are known very well;
He always is led with a dog and a bell:
A seely old man, God knoweth, is he,
Yet he is the father of pretty Bessee."

"Nay then," quoth the merchant, "thou art not for me":
"Nor," quoth the innholder, "my wife shalt thou be":
"I loathe," said the gentle, "a beggar's degree,
And therefore adieu, my pretty Bessee!"

[1] *Seely*, simple.

"Why then," quoth the knight, "hap better or worse,
I weigh not true love by the weight of the purse,
And beauty is beauty in every degree;
Then welcome unto me, my pretty Bessee:

"With thee to thy father forthwith I will go."
"Nay soft," quoth his kinsmen, "it must not be so;
A poor beggar's daughter no lady shall be;
Then take thy adieu of pretty Bessee."

But soon after this, by break of the day,
The knight had from Rumford stole Bessy away.
The young men of Rumford, as thick as might be,
Rode after to fetch again pretty Bessee.

As swift as the wind to ride they were seen,
Until they came near unto Bethnal Green;
And as the knight lighted most courteouslie,
They all fought against him for pretty Bessee.

But rescue came speedily over the plain,
Or else the young knight for his love had been slain.
This fray being ended, then straightway he see
His kinsmen come railing at pretty Bessee.

Then spake the blind beggar, "Although I be poor,
Yet rail not against my child at my own door:
Though she be not deckèd in velvet and pearl,
Yet will I drop angels[1] with you for my girl.

"And then, if my gold may better her birth,
And equal the gold that you lay on the earth,
Then neither rail nor grudge you to see
The blind beggar's daughter a lady to be.

[1] *Angels*, gold coins.

"But first you shall promise, and have it well known,
The gold that you drop shall all be your own."
With that they replied, "Contented be we."
"Then here's," quoth the beggar, "for pretty Bessee!"

With that an angel he cast on the ground,
And droppèd in angels full three thousand pound;
And oftentimes it was provèd most plain,
For the gentlemen's one the beggar dropped twain:

So that the place, wherein they did sit,
With gold it was coverèd every whit.
The gentlemen then having dropt all their store,
Said, "Now, beggar, hold; for we have no more.

"Thou hast fulfillèd thy promise aright."
"Then marry," quoth he, "my girl to this knight;
And here," added he, "I will now throw you down
A hundred pounds more to buy her a gown."

The gentlemen all, that this treasure had seen,
Admirèd the beggar of Bethnal Green:
And all those that were her suitors before
Their flesh for very anger they tore.

Thus the fair Bess was matched to the knight,
And then made a lady in others' despite:
A fairer lady there never was seen
Than the blind beggar's daughter of Bethnal Green.

But of their sumptuous marriage and feast,
What brave lords and knights thither were prest,
The SECOND FITT[1] shall set forth to your sight
With marvellous plëasure, and wishèd delight.

[1] *Fitt*, a part of a poem, a canto.

Part the Second

Of a blind beggar's daughter most bright,
That late was betrothèd unto a young knight;
All the discourse thereof you did see;
But now comes the wedding of pretty Bessee.

Within a gorgeous palace most brave,
Adornèd with all the cost they could have,
This wedding was kept most sumptuouslie,
And all for the credit of pretty Bessee.

All kind of dainties, and delicates sweet
Were bought for the banquet, as it was most meet;
Partridge, and plover, and venison most free,
Against the brave wedding of pretty Bessee.

This marriage through England was spread by report,
So that a great number thereto did resort
Of nobles and gentles in every degree;
And all for the fame of pretty Bessee.

To church then went this gallant young knight;
His bride followed after, an angel most bright,
With troops of gay ladies, the like ne'er was seen
As went with sweet Bessy of Bethnal Green.

This marriage being solèmnizèd then,
With music performed by the skilfullest men,
The nobles and gentles sate down at that tide,
Each one admiring the beautiful bride.

Now, after the sumptuous dinner was done,
To talk and to reason a number begun;
They talked of the blind beggar's daughter most bright,
And what with his daughter he gave to the knight.

Then spake the nobles, "Much marvel have we,
This jolly blind beggar we cannot here see."
"My lords," quoth the bride, "my father's so base,
He is loth with his presence these states to disgrace."

"The praise of a woman in question to bring
Before her own face, were a flattering thing;
But we think thy father's baseness," quoth they,
"Might by thy beauty be clean put away."

They had no sooner these pleasant words spoke,
But in comes the beggar clad in a silk cloak;
A fair velvet cap and a feather had he,
And now a musician forsooth he would be.

He had a dainty lute under his arm,
He touchèd the strings, which made such a charm,
Says, "Please you to hear any music of me,
I'll sing you a song of pretty Bessee."

With that his lute he twangèd straightway,
And thereon began most sweetly to play;
And after that lessons were played two or three,
He strained out his song most delicatelie.

"A poor beggar's daughter did dwell on a green,
Who for her fairness might well be a queen:
A blithe bonny lass, and a dainty was she,
And many one callèd her pretty Bessee.

"Her father he had no goods, nor no land,
But begged for a penny all day with his hand;
And yet to her marriage he gave thousands three,
And still he hath somewhat for pretty Bessee.

"And if anyone here her birth do disdain,
Her father is ready, with might and with main,
To prove she is come of noble degree,
Therefore never flout at poor Bessee."

With that the lords and the company round
With hearty laughter were ready to swound.
At last said the lords, "Full well we may see,
The bride and the beggar's beholden to thee."

On this the bride all blushing did rise,
The pearly drops standing within her fair eyes.
"O pardon my father, grave nobles," quoth she,
"That through blind affection thus doteth on me."

"If this be thy father," the nobles did say,
"Well may he be proud of this happy day;
Yet by his countenance well may we see,
His birth and his fortune did never agree:

"And therefore, blind man, we pray thee bewray,
(And look that the truth thou to us do say),
Thy birth and thy parentage. what it may be;
For the love that thou bearest to pretty Bessee."

"Then give me leave, nobles and gentles, each one,
One song more to sing, and then I have done;
And if that it may not win good report,
Then do not give me a groat for my sport.

"Sir Simon de Montfort my subject shall be;
Once chief of all the great barons was he,
Yet fortune so cruel this lord did abase,
Now lost and forgotten are he and his race.

"When the barons in arms did King Henry oppose,
Sir Simon de Montfort their leader they chose;
A leader of courage undaunted was he,
And oft-times he made their bold enemies flee.

"At length in the battle on Evesham plain,
The barons were routed, and Montfort was slain;
Most fatal that battle did prove unto thee,
Though thou wast not born then, my pretty Bessee!

"Along with the nobles, that fell at that tide,
His eldest son Henry, who fought by his side,
Was felled by a blow he received in the fight:
A blow that deprived him for ever of sight.

"Among the dead bodies all lifeless he lay,
Till evening drew on of the following day,
When by a young lady discovered was he;
And this was thy mother, my pretty Bessee!

"A baron's fair daughter stept forth in the night
To search for her father, who fell in the fight,
And seeing young Montfort, where gasping he lay,
Was movèd with pity, and brought him away.

"In secret she nursed him, and swagèd his pain,
While he through the realm was thought to be slain;
At length his fair bride she consented to be,
And made him glad father of pretty Bessee.

"And now, lest our foes our lives should betray,
We clothèd ourselves in beggars' array;
Her jewels she sold, and hither came we:
All our comfort and care was our pretty Bessee.

"And here have we livèd in fortune's despite,
Though poor, yet contented with humble delight:
Full forty winters thus have I been
A silly blind beggar of Bethnal Green.

"And here, noble lordès, is ended the song
Of one that once to your own rank did belong:
And thus have you learnèd a secret from me,
That ne'er had been known but for pretty Bessee."

Now when the fair company every one,
Had heard the strange tale in the song he had shown,
They all were amazèd, as well they might be,
Both at the blind beggar, and pretty Bessee.

With that the fair bride they all did embrace,
Saying, "Sure thou art come of an honourable race,
Thy father likewise is of noble degree,
And thou art well worthy a lady to be."

Thus was the feast ended with joy and delight,
A bridegroom most happy then was the young knight,
In joy and felicity long livèd he,
All with his fair lady, the pretty Bessee.

King John and the Abbot of Canterbury

AN ancient story I'll tell you anon
Of a notable prince that was called King John;
And he ruled England with main and with might
For he did great wrong, and maintained little right

And I'll tell you a story, a story so merry,
Concerning the Abbot of Canterbury;
How for his house-keeping and high renown,
They rode post for him to fair London town.

An hundred men, the king did hear say,
The abbot kept in his house every day;
And fifty gold chains, without any doubt,
In velvet coats waited the abbot about.

"How now, father abbot, I hear it of thee,
Thou keepest a far better house than me;
And for thy house-keeping and high renown,
I fear thou work'st treason against my crown."

"My liege," quo' the abbot, "I would it were known,
I never spend nothing, but what is my own;
And I trust your grace will do me no deere,[1]
For spending of my own true-gotten gear."

"Yes, yes, father abbot, thy fault it is high,
And now for the same thou needest must die;
For except thou canst answer me questions three,
Thy head shall be smitten from thy bodie.

[1] *Deere*, harm.

"And first," quo' the king, "when I'm in this stead,
With my crown of gold so fair on my head,
Among all my liegemen so noble of birth,
Thou must tell me to one penny what I am worth.

"Secondly, tell me, without any doubt,
How soon I may ride the whole world about;
And at the third question thou must not shrink,
But tell me here truly what I do think."

"O these are hard questions for my shallow wit,
Nor I cannot answer your grace as yet:
But if you will give me but three weeks' space,
I'll do my endeavour to answer your grace."

"Now three weeks' space to thee will I give,
And that is the longest time thou hast to live;
For if thou dost not answer my questions three,
Thy lands and thy livings are forfeit to me."

Away rode the abbot all sad at that word,
And he rode to Cambridge and Oxenford;
But never a doctor there was so wise,
That could with his learning an answer devise.

Then home rode the abbot of comfort so cold,
And he met his shepherd a-going to fold;
"How now, my lord abbot, you are welcome home;
What news do you bring us from good King John?"

"Sad news, sad news, shepherd, I must give,
That I have but three days more to live;
For if I do not answer him questions three,
My head will be smitten from my bodie.

"The first is to tell him there in that stead,
With his crown of gold so fair on his head,
Among all his liegemen so noble of birth,
To within one penny of what he is worth.

"The second, to tell him, without any doubt,
How soon he may ride this whole world about:
And at the third question I must not shrink,
But tell him there truly what he does think."

"Now cheer up, sir abbot, did you never hear yet,
That a fool he may learn a wise man wit?
Lend me horse and serving-men, and your apparel,
And I'll ride to London to answer your quarrel.

"Nay frown not, if it hath been told unto me,
I am like your lordship, as ever may be;
And if you will but lend me your gown,
There is none shall know us at fair London town."

"Now horses and serving-men thou shalt have,
With sumptuous array most gallant and brave,
With crozier and mitre, and rochet, and cope,
Fit to appear 'fore our father the Pope."

"Now, welcome, sir abbot," the king he did say,
"'Tis well thou'rt come back to keep thy day:
For and if thou canst answer my questions three,
Thy life and thy living both savèd shall be.

"And first, when thou seest me here in this stead,
With my crown of gold so fair on my head,
Among all my liegemen so noble of birth,
Tell me to one penny what I am worth."

"For thirty pence our Saviour was sold
Among the false Jews, as I have been told:
And twenty-nine is the worth of thee,
For I think thou art one penny worser than He."

The king he laughed, and swore by St Bittel,
"I did not think I had been worth so little!
—Now secondly tell me, without any doubt,
How soon I may ride this whole world about."

"You must rise with the sun, and ride with the same,
Until the next morning he rises again;
And then your grace need not make any doubt
But in twenty-four hours you'll ride it about."

The king he laughed, and swore by St John,
"I did not think it could be done so soon!
—Now from the third question thou must not shrink,
But tell me here truly what I do think."

"Yea, that shall I do, and make your grace merry;
You think I'm the Abbot of Canterbury;
But I'm his poor shepherd, as plain you may see,
That am come to beg pardon for him and for me."

The king he laughed, and swore by the mass,
"I'll make thee lord abbot this day in his place!"
"Now nay, my liege, be not in such speed,
For alack! I can neither write nor read."

"Four nobles a week then, I will give thee,
For this merry jest thou hast shown unto me;
And tell the old abbot when thou comest home,
Thou hast brought him a pardon from good King John."

Robin Hood and Little John

WHEN Robin Hood was about twenty years old,
With a hey down, down, and a down;
He happened to meet Little John,
A jolly brisk blade, right fit for the trade,
For he was a lusty young man.

Though he was called Little, his limbs they were large,
And his stature was seven foot high;
Wherever he came, they quaked at his name,
For soon he would make them to fly.

How they came acquainted, I'll tell you in brief,
If you would but listen awhile;
For this very jest, among all the rest,
I think it may cause you to smile.

For Robin Hood said to his jolly bowmen,
"Pray tarry you here in this grove;
And see that you all observe well my call,
While thorough the forest I rove.

'We have had no sport for these fourteen long days,
Therefore now abroad will I go;
Now should I be beat, and cannot retreat,
My horn I will presently blow."

Then did he shake hands with his merry men all,
And bid them at present good-bye:
Then, as near the brook his journey he took,
A stranger he chanced to espy.

They happened to meet on a long narrow bridge,
And neither of them would give way;
Quoth bold Robin Hood, and sturdily stood,
"I'll shew you right Nottingham-play."

With that from his quiver an arrow he drew,
A broad arrow with a goose-wing.
The stranger replied, "I'll cudgel thy hide,
If thou offer to touch the string."

Quoth bold Robin Hood, "Thou dost prate like an ass,
For were I to bend but my bow,
I could send a dart, quite thro' thy proud heart,
Before thou couldest strike me one blow."

"Thou talkest like a coward," the stranger replied;
"Well armed with a long bow you stand
To shoot at my breast, while I, I protest,
Have naught but a staff in my hand."

"The name of a coward," quoth Robin, "I scorn,
Therefore my long bow I'll lay by,
And now, for thy sake, a staff will I take,
The truth of my manhood to try."

Then Robin Hood stept to a thicket of trees,
And chose him a staff of ground oak;
Now this being done, away he did run
To the stranger, and merrily spoke:

"Lo! see my staff is lusty and tough,
Now here on the bridge we will play;
Whoever falls in, the other shall win
The battle, and so we'll away."

"With all my whole heart," the stranger replied,
"I scorn in the least to give out";
This said, they fell to't without more dispute,
And their staffs they did flourish about.

At first Robin he gave the stranger a bang,
So hard that he made his bones ring.
The stranger he said, "This must be repaid,
I'll give you as good as you bring.

"So long as I am able to handle a staff,
To die in your debt, friend, I scorn."
Then to it each goes, and followed their blows,
As if they'd been threshing of corn.

The stranger gave Robin a crack on the crown,
Which causèd the blood to appear;
Then Robin enraged, more fiercely engaged,
And followed his blows more severe.

So thick and so fast did he lay it on him,
With a passionate fury and ire;
At every stroke he made him to smoke,
As if he had been all on fire.

Oh then into fury the strangere grew,
And gave him a villainous look,
And with it a blow, that laid him full low,
And tumbled him into the brook.

"I prithee, good fellow, where art thou now?"
The stranger, in laughter, he cried.
Quoth bold Robin Hood, "Good faith, in the flood,
And floating along with the tide.

"I needs must acknowledge thou art a brave soul,
With thee I'll no longer contend;
For needs must I say, thou hast got the day,
Our battle shall be at an end."

Then unto the bank he did presently wade,
And pulled himself out by a thorn;
Which done, at the last he blowed a loud blast
Straightway on his fine bugle-horn:

The echo of which through the valleys did fly,
At which his stout bowmen appeared,
All clothèd in green, most gay to be seen,
So up to their master they steered.

"O, what's the matter?" quoth William Stutly,
"Good master you are wet to the skin."
"No matter," quoth he, "the lad which you see
In fighting hath tumbled me in."

"He shall not go scot-free," the others replied,
So straight they were seizing him there,
To duck him likewise: but Robin Hood cries,
"He is a stout fellow; forbear.

"There's no one shall wrong thee, friend, be not afraid;
These bowmen upon me do wait;
There's threescore and nine; if thou wilt be mine,
Thou shalt have my livery straight,

"And other accoutrements fit for a man;
Speak up, jolly blade, never fear:
I'll teach you also the use of the bow,
To shoot at the fat fallow deer."

"O, here is my hand," the stranger replied,
"I'll serve you with all my whole heart;
My name is John Little, a man of good mettle;
Ne'er doubt me, for I'll play my part."

"His name shall be altered," quoth William Stutly,
"And I will his godfather be;
Prepare then a feast, and none of the least,
For we will be merry," quoth he.

They presently fetched in a brace of fat does,
With humming strong liquor likewise;
They loved what was good; so in the green wood,
This pretty sweet babe they baptize.

He was, I must tell you, but seven foot high,
And, may be, an ell in the waist;
A sweet pretty lad: much feasting they had;
Bold Robin the festival graced,

With all his bowmen, which stood in a ring,
And were of the Nottingham breed;
Brave Stutly came then, with seven yeomèn,
And did in this manner proceed:

"This infant was callèd John Little," quoth he;
"Which name shall be changèd anon:
The words we'll transpose; so wherever he goes,
His name shall be called Little John."

They all with a shout made the elements ring;
So soon as the office was o'er,
To feasting they went, with true merriment,
And tippled strong liquor galore.

Then Robin he took the pretty sweet babe,
And clothed him from top to the toe,
In garments of green, most gay to be seen,
And gave him a curious long bow.

"Thou shalt be an archer as well as the best,
And range in the green wood with us;
Where we'll not want gold nor silver, behold,
While bishops have aught in their purse.

"We live here like squires, or lords of renown,
Without e'er a foot of free land;
We feast on good cheer, with wine, ale, and beer,
And everything at our command."

Then music and dancing did finish the day;
At length, when the sun waxèd low,
Then all the whole train the grove did refrain,
And unto their caves they did go.

And so, ever after, as long as he lived,
Although he was proper and tall,
Yet, nevertheless, the truth to express,
Still Little John they did him call.

Hynde Etin

MAY MARGARET sits in her bower-door,
Sewing at her silken seam;
She heard a note in Elmond wood,
And wished she there had been.

She loot the seam fa' frae her side,
The needle to her tae,
And she's awa' to Elmond wood
As fast as she could gae.

She hadna' pu'd a nut, a nut,
Nor broken a branch but ane,
Till up started the Hynde Etin,
Says, "Lady, lat alane!

"O why pu' ye the nut, the nut,
Or why brake ye the tree?
For I am forester o' this wood—
Ye sould speir leave at me."

But aye she pu'd the ither berry,
Nae thinking o' the skaith,[1]
And said, "To wrang ye, Hynde Etin,
I wad be unco laith."

But he has ta'en her by the yellow locks,
And tied her till a tree;
And said, "For slichting my commands,
An ill death ye sall dree."[2]

He pu'd a tree out o' the wood,
The biggest that was there;
And he houkit a cave monie fathoms deep,
And put May Margaret there.

"Now rest ye there, ye saucy May!
My woods are free for thee;
And gif I tak' ye to mysel',
The better ye'll likê me!"

[1] *Skaith*, harm. [2] *Dree*, suffer.

Nae rest, nae rest May Margaret took,
Sleep gat she never nane;
Her back lay on the cauld, cauld floor,
Her head upon a stane.

"O tak' me out," May Margaret cried;
"O tak' me hame to thee;
And I sall be your bounden wife
Until the day I dee."

He took her out o' the dungeon deep,
And awa' wi' him she's gane;
But sad was the day an earl's dochter
Gaed hame wi' Hynde Etin.

O they hae lived in Elmond wood
For six lang years and one;
Till six pretty sons to him she bore;
And the seventh she's brought home.

These seven bairns, sae fair and fine,
That she did to him bring,
They never were in good church door,
Nor ever got good kirking.

And aye at night, wi' harp in hand,
She harpèd them asleep;
And she sat down at their bedside,
And bitterly did weep.

Said, "Seven lang years now have I lived
Within this cave o' stane;
And never was at gude kirk-door,
Nor heard the kirk bell ring."

It fell out ance upon a day,
Hynde Etin went frae hame;
And he's ta'en wi' him his eldest son,
To gang alang wi' him.

"A question I wad ask, father,
Gin ye wadna angry be!"
"Say on, say on, my bonnie boy,
Ye'se nae be quarrelled by me."

"I see my mither's cheeks aye weet,
Alas! they are seldom dry";
"Nae wonder, nae wonder, my bonnie boy,
Though she should brast and die.

"Your mither was an earl's dauchter,
Sprung frae a high degree,
And she might hae wed the first in the land,
Had she nae been stown by me.

"But we'll shoot the laverock[1] in the lift,[2]
The buntlin on the tree,
And ye'll carry them hame to your mither,
See if she'll merrier be."

It fell upon another day,
Hynde Etin he thocht lang;
And he is to the hunting gane,
As fast as he could gang.

"O I will tell to you, mither.
Gin ye wadna angry be,"
"Speak on, speak on, my little wee boy,
Ask onything at me!"

[1] *Laverock*, lark. [2] *Lift*, sky.

"As we cam' frae the hind-hunting,
I heard the kirk bells ring."
"My blessings on you, my bonnie boy!
I wish I'd been there my lane.

"My blessing on your heart, my boy,
O were I there alane!
I hae na been in the haly kirk,
Sin' seven lang years are gane!"

He's ta'en his mither by the hand,
His six brithers also;
And they are on through Elmond wood
As fast as they could go.

They wist na weel whaur they were gaen,
Wi' the stratlins[1] o' their feet;
They wist na weel whaur they were gaen,
Till at her father's yett.[2]

"I hae nae money in my pocket,
But royal rings hae three:
I'll gie them you, my little wee son,
And ye'll walk there for me.

"Ye'll gie the first to the proud porter,
And he will let you in;
Ye'll gie the neist to the butler-boy,
And he will show you ben;

"Ye'll gie the third to the minstrel
That's harping in the ha':
He'll play success to the bonnie boy,
That comes frae greenwood shaw."

[1] *Stratlins*, straddlings, uncertain steps. [2] *Yett*, gate.

He gied the first to the proud porter,
And he opened and let him in,
He gied the neist to the butler boy,
And he has showed him ben;

He gied the third to the minstrel,
That was harping in the ha',
And he played success to the bonnie boy,
That cam' frae greenwood shaw.

Now when he came before the Earl,
He fell low on his knee;
The Earl he turned him round about,
And the saut tear blint his ee.

"Win up,[1] win up, my bonnie boy,
Gang frae my companie;
Ye look sae like my dear dauchter,
My heart will burst in three."

"If I look like your dear dauchter,
A wonder it is nane;
If I look like your dear dauchter,
For I am her eldest son."

"O tell me now, my little wee boy,
Where may my Margaret be?"
"She's just now standing at your yetts,
And my six brithers her wi'."

"O where are a' my porter boys,
That I pay meat and fee,
To open my yetts baith wide and braid,
Let her come in to me?"

[1] *Win up*, rise.

When she cam' in before the Earl,
She fell low on her knee;
"Win up, win up, my dauchter dear,
This day ye'll dine wi' me."

"Nae, but I canna eat, father,
Nor ae drap can I drink,
Till I see my mother and sister dear,
For lang for them I think.

"Ae bit I canna eat, father,
Nor ae drap can I drink,
Until I see my dear husband,
For lang for him I think."

"O where are a' my rangers bauld,
That I pay meat and fee,
To search the forest far and wide,
And bring Etin to me?"

They searched the country wide and broad,
The forests far and near;
Till they found him into Elmond,
Tearing his yellow hair.

"Win up, win up now, Hynde Etin,
Win up and boun wi' me,
We're messengers come frae our lord:
The Earl wants you to see."

"O lat him tak frae me the head,
Or hang me on a tree,
For since I've lost my dear ladie,
Life's nae pleasure to me."

"Your head will nae be touched, Etin,
Nor hanged upon a tree:
Your lady's in her father's ha',
And a' he wants is thee."

When he cam in before the Earl,
He fell low on his knee;
"Win up, win up now, Hynde Etin,
This day ye'se dine wi' me."

As they were at the dinner set,
The young boy thus spak' he,
"I wish we were at haly kirk,
To get our Christendie!"

"Your asking's nae sae great, my boy,
But granted it shall be;
This day to gude kirk ye shall gang,
Your mither shall gang you wi'."

When into the gude kirk they cam',
She at the door did stan',
She was sae sair sunk down wi' shame,
She wadna come far'er ben.

Then out and spak' the parish priest,
And a sweet smile gae he:
"Come ben, come ben, my lilie flower,
Present your babes to me."

And he has ta'en and sained them a',
And gi'en them Christendie;
And they staid in her father's ha',
And lived wi' mirth and glee.

The Wife of Usher's Well

THERE lived a wife at Usher's Well,
And a wealthy wife was she;
She had three stout and stalwart sons,
And sent them o'er the sea.

They hadna been a week from her,
A week but barely ane,
When word came to the carline wife
That her three sons were gane.

They hadna been a week from her,
A week but barely three,
When word came to the carline wife
That her sons she'd never see.

"I wish the wind may never cease,
Nor fashes[1] in the flood,
Till my three sons come hame to me,
In earthly flesh and blood."

It fell about the Martinmas,
When nights are lang and mirk,
The carline wife's three sons came hame,
And their hats were o' the birk.

It neither grew in syke[2] nor ditch,
Nor yet in ony sheugh[3];
But at the gates o' Paradise
That birk grew fair eneugh.

[1] *Fashes*, troubles. [2] *Syke*, marsh. [3] *Sheugh*, trench.

"Blow up the fire, my maidens!
Bring water from the well!
For a' my house shall feast this night,
Since my three sons are well."

And she has made to them a bed,
She's made it large and wide;
And she's taen her mantle her about,
Sat down at the bed-side.

Up then crew the red, red cock,
And up and crew the gray;
The eldest to the youngest said,
"'Tis time we were away."

The cock he hadna crawed but ance,
And clapped his wings at a',
When the youngest to the eldest said,
"Brother, we must awa'.

"The cock doth craw, the day doth daw,
The channerin'[1] worm doth chide;
Gin we be missed out o' our place,
A sair pain we maun bide.

"Fare ye weel, my mother dear!
Fareweel to barn and byre!
And fare ye weel, the bonny lass
That kindles my mother's fire!"

[1] *Channerin'*, fretting.

Sir Patrick Spens

THE king sits in Dunfermline town,
Drinking the blude-red wine;
"O whare will I get a skeely skipper
To sail this new ship of mine?"

O up and spake an eldern knight,
Sat at the king's right knee:
"Sir Patrick Spens is the best sailòr
That ever sailed the sea."

Our king has written a braid letter,
And sealed it with his hand,
And sent it to Sir Patrick Spens,
Was walking on the strand.

"To Noroway, to Noroway,
To Noroway o'er the faem;
The king's daughter of Noroway,
'Tis thou maun bring her hame."

The first word that Sir Patrick read,
Sae loud, loud laughèd he;
The neist word that Sir Patrick read,
The tear blinded his ee.

"O wha is this has done this deed,
And tauld the king o' me,
To send us out at this time o' year,
To sail upon the sea?

"Be it wind, be it weet, be it hail, be it sleet,
Our ship must sail the faem;
The king's daughter of Noroway,
'Tis we must fetch her hame."

They hoysed their sails on Monenday morn,
Wi' a' the speed they may;
They hae landed in Noroway,
Upon a Wodensday.

They hadna been a week, a week,
In Noroway, but twae,
When that the lords o' Noroway
Began aloud to say:

"Ye Scottishmen spend a' our king's goud,
And a' our queenis fee."—
"Ye lie, ye lie, ye liars loud,
Fu' loud I hear ye lie,

"For I brought as much white monie
As gane[1] my men and me,
And I brought a half-fou[2] of gude red goud,
Out o'er the sea wi' me.

"Mak ready, mak ready, my merry men a'
Our gude ship sails the morn!"—
"Now, ever alack, my master dear,
I fear a deadly storm!

"I saw the new moon, late yestreen,
Wi' the auld moon in her arm;
And if we gang to sea, master,
I fear we'll come to harm."

They hadna sailed a league, a league,
A league but barely three,
When the lift grew dark, and the wind blew loud,
And gurly grew the sea.

[1] *Gane*, suffice.
[2] *Half-fou*, the eighth part of a peck.

The ankers brak, and the top-masts lap,[1]
It was sic a deadly storm;
And the waves cam o'er the broken ship,
Till a' her sides were torn.

"O where will I get a gude sailor
To take my helm in hand,
Till I get up to the tall top-mast,
To see if I can spy land?"—

"O here am I, a sailor gude,
To take the helm in hand,
Till you go up to the tall top-mast;
But I fear you'll ne'er spy land."

He hadna gane a step, a step,
A step but barely ane,
When a bolt flew out of our goodly ship,
And the salt sea it cam in.

"Gae, fetch a web o' the silken claith,
Another o' the twine,
And wap them into our ship's side,
And let nae the sea come in."

They fetched a web o' the silken claith,
Another o' the twine,
And they wapped them round that gude ship's side,
But still the sea cam in.

O laith, laith, were our gude Scots lords
To weet their cork-heeled shoon!
But lang or a' the play was played,
They wat their hats aboon.

[1] *Lap*, sprang.

And mony was the feather-bed
That flattered [1] on the faem;
And mony was the gude lord's son
That never mair cam hame.

The ladies wrang their fingers white,
The maidens tore their hair,
A' for the sake of their true loves;
For them they'll see nae mair.

O lang, lang, may the ladies sit,
Wi' their fans into their hand,
Before they see Sir Patrick Spens
Come sailing to the strand!

And lang, lang, may the maidens sit,
Wi' their goud kaims in their hair,
A' waiting for their ain dear loves!
For them they'll see nae mair.

Half ower, half ower to Aberdour,
'Tis fifty fathoms deep,
And there lies gude Sir Patrick Spens,
Wi' the Scots lords at his feet.

Kinmont Willie

O HAVE ye na heard o' the fause Sakelde?
O have ye na heard o' the keen Lord Scroope?
How they hae ta'en bauld Kinmont Willie,
On Haribee [2] to hang him up?

[1] *Flattered*, fluttered, or rather, floated.
[2] Haribee was the place of execution at Carlisle.

Had Willie had but twenty men,
But twenty men as stout as he,
Fause Sakelde had never the Kinmont ta'en,
Wi' eight score in his companie.

They band his legs beneath the steed,
They tied his hands behind his back!
They guarded him, fivesome on each side,
And they brought him ower the Liddel-rack.

They led him thro' the Liddel-rack,
And also thro' the Carlisle sands;
They brought him to Carlisle castell,
To be at my Lord Scroope's commands.

"My hands are tied, but my tongue is free,
And whae will dare this deed avow?
Or answer by the Border law?
Or answer to the bauld Buccleuch?"—

"Now haud thy tongue, thou rank reiver!
There's never a Scot shall set thee free:
Before ye cross my castle yett,[1]
I trow ye shall take farewell o' me."

"Fear na ye that, my lord," quo' Willie:
"By the faith o' my body, Lord Scroope," he said,
"I never yet lodged in a hostelrie,
But I paid my lawing before I gaed."—

Now word is gane to the bauld Keeper,
In Branksome Ha', where that he lay,
That Lord Scroope has ta'en the Kinmont Willie,
Between the hours of night and day.

[1] *Yett*, gate.

He has ta'en the table wi' his hand,
He garred the red wine spring on hie—
"Now Christ's curse on my head," he said,
"But avengèd of Lord Scroope I'll be!

"O is my basnet[1] a widow's curch?
Or my lance a wand of the willow-tree?
Or my arm a ladye's lilye hand,
That an English lord should lightly[2] me?

"And have they ta'en him, Kinmont Willie,
Against the truce of Border tide?
And forgotten that the bauld Buccleuch
Is Keeper here on the Scottish side?

"And have they e'en ta'en him, Kinmont Willie
Withouten either dread or fear?
And forgotten that the bauld Buccleuch
Can back a steed, or shake a spear?

"O were there war between the lands,
As well I wot that there is none.
I would slight Carlisle castell high,
Though it were builded of marble stone.

"I would set that castle in a lowe,[3]
And sloken[4] it with English blood!
There's never a man in Cumberland,
Should ken where Carlisle castell stood.

"But since nae war's between the lands,
And there is peace, and peace should be,
I'll neither harm English lad or lass,
And yet the Kinmont freed shall be!"

[1] *Basnet*, helmet.
[2] *Lightly*, set light by, despise.
[3] *Lowe*, flame.
[4] *Sloken*, slake.

He has called him forty marchmen bauld,
I trow they were of his ane name,
Except Sir Gilbert Elliot, called
The laird of Stobs, I mean the same.

He has called him forty marchmen bauld,
Were kinsmen to the bauld Buccleuch;
With spur on heel, and splent on spauld,[1]
And gleuves of green, and feathers blue.

There were five and five before them a',
Wi' hunting-horns and bugles bright:
And five and five came wi' Buccleuch,
Like warden's men, arrayed for fight.

And five and five, like a mason gang,
That carried the ladders lang and hie;
And five and five, like broken men[2];
And so they reached the Woodhouselee.

And as we crossed the 'Bateable Land,
When to the English side we held,
The first o' men that we met wi',
Whae sould it be but fause Sakelde?

"Where be ye gaun, ye hunters keen?"
Quo' fause Sakelde; "come tell to me!"—
"We go to hunt an English stag,
Has trespassed on the Scots countrie."

"Where be ye gaun, ye marshal men?"
Quo' fause Sakelde; "come tell me true!"—
"We go to catch a rank reiver,
Has broken faith wi' the bauld Buccleuch."

[1] *Splent on spauld*, armour on shoulder
[2] *Broken men*, outlaws.

"Where are ye gaun ye masons lads,
Wi' a' your ladders, lang and hie?"—
"We gang to herry a corbie's nest,
That wons not far frae Woodhouselee."

"Where be ye gaun, ye broken men?"
Quo' fause Sakelde: "come tell to me!"
Now Dickie of Dryhope led that band,
And the never a word of lear[1] had he.

"Why trespass ye on the English side?
Row-footed[2] outlaws, stand!" quo' he;
The never a word had Dickie to say,
Sae he thrust the lance through his false bodie.

Then on we held for Carlisle toun,
And at Staneshaw-bank the Eden we crossed;
The water was great and mickle of spait,[3]
But the never a horse nor man we lost.

And when we reached the Staneshaw-bank,
The wind was rising loud and hie;
And there the laird garred leave our steeds,
For fear that they should stamp and nie.

And when we left the Staneshaw-bank,
The wind began full loud to blaw;
But 'twas wind and weet, and fire and sleet,
When we came beneath the castle wa'.

We crept on knees, and held our breath,
Till we placed the ladders against the wa';
And sae ready was Buccleuch himsell
To mount the first before us a.'

[1] *Lear*, lore, learning. [2] *Row-footed*, roughshod.
[3] *Spait*, flood.

He has ta'en the watchman by the throat,
He flung him down upon the lead—
"Had there not been peace between our lands,
Upon the other side thou hadst gaed!—

"Now sound out, trumpets!" quo' Buccleuch;
"Let's waken Lord Scroope right merrilie!"
Then loud the warden's trumpet blew—
O wha dare meddle wi' me.[1]

Then speedilie to wark we gaed,
And raised the slogan[2] ane and a',
And cut a hole through a sheet of lead,
And so we wan to the castle ha'.

They thought King James and a' his men
Had won the house wi' bow and spear:
It was but twenty Scots and ten,
That put a thousand in sic a stear![3]

Wi' coulters, and wi' forehammers,
We garred the bars bang merrilie,
Until we came to the inner prison,
Where Willie o' Kinmont he did lie.

And we cam' to the lower prison,
Where Willie o' Kinmont he did lie—
"O sleep ye, wake ye, Kinmont Willie,
Upon the morn that thou's to die?"

"O I sleep saft, and I wake aft;
It's lang since sleeping was fleyed[4] frae me!
Gie my service back to my wife and bairns,
And a' gude fellows that spier for me."

[1] *O wha dare*, etc., the name of a Border tune.
[2] *Slogan*, war-cry. [3] *Stear*, stir. [4] *Fleyed*, frightened.

Then Red Rowan has hente [1] him up,
The starkest man in Teviotdale—
"Abide, abide now, Red Rowan,
Till of my Lord Scroope I take farewell.

"Farewell, farewell, my gude Lord Scroope!
My gude Lord Scroope, farewell!" he cried—
"I'll pay you for my lodging maill,[2]
When first we meet on the border side."—

Then shoulder high, with shout and cry,
We bore him down the ladder lang;
At every stride Red Rowan made,
I wot the Kinmont's airns played clang!

"O mony a time," quo' Kinmont Willie,
"I have ridden horse baith wild and wud;
But a rougher beast than Red Rowan
I ween my legs have ne'er bestrode.

"And mony a time," quo' Kinmont Willie,
"I've pricked a horse out owre the furs [3];
But since the day I backed a steed,
I never wore sic cumbrous spurs!"

We scarce had won the Staneshaw-bank,
When a' the Carlisle bells were rung,
And a thousand men on horse and foot,
Came wi' the keen Lord Scroope along.

Buccleuch has turned to Eden Water,
Even where it flowed frae bank to brim,
And he has plunged in wi' a' his band,
And safely swam them through the stream.

[1] *Hente*, lifted. [2] *Maill*, rent. [3] *Furs*, furrows.

He turned him on the other side,
And at Lord Scroope his glove flung he—
"If ye like na my visit in merry England,
In fair Scotland come visit me!"

All sore astonished stood Lord Scroope,
He stood as still as rock of stane;
He scarcely dared to trew his eyes,
When through the water he had gane,

"He is either himsell a devil frae hell,
Or else his mother a witch maun be;
I wadna have ridden that wan water
For a' the gowd in Christentie."

Chevy Chase

GOD prosper long our noble king,
Our lives and safeties all;
A woeful hunting once there did
In Chevy Chase befall.

To drive the deer with hound and horn
Earl Percy took his way;
The child may rue that is unborn
The hunting of that day!

The stout Earl of Northumberland
A vow to God did make,
His pleasure in the Scottish woods
Three summer's days to take;

The chiefest harts in Chevy Chase
To kill and bear away.
These tidings to Earl Douglas came
In Scotland where he lay;

Who sent Earl Percy present word
He would prevent his sport.
The English Earl, not fearing that,
Did to the woods resort,

With fifteen hundred bowmen bold,
All chosen men of might,
Who knew full well in time of need
To aim their shafts aright.

The gallant greyhounds swiftly ran,
To chase the fallow deer;
On Monday they began to hunt,
Ere daylight did appear;

And long before high noon they had
An hundred fat bucks slain;
Then having dined, the drovers went
To rouse the deer again.

The bowmen mustered on the hills,
Well able to endure;
Their backsides all, with special care,
That day were guarded sure.

The hounds ran swiftly through the woods,
The nimble deer to take,
That with their cries the hills and dales
An echo shrill did make.

Lord Percy to the quarry went,
To view the slaughtered deer;
Quoth he, "Earl Douglas promisèd
This day to meet me here;

"But if I thought he would not come,
No longer would I stay."
With that a brave young gentleman
Thus to the Earl did say:

"Lo, yonder doth Earl Douglas come,
His men in armour bright;
Full twenty hundred Scottish spears
All marching in our sight;

"All men of pleasant Tividale
Fast by the river Tweed."
"O cease your sports," Earl Percy said,
"And take your bows with speed;

"And now with me, my countrymen,
Your courage forth advance,
For there was never champion yet,
In Scotland nor in France,

"That ever did on horseback come,
But if my hap it were,
I durst encounter man for man,
And with him break a spear."

Earl Douglas on his milk-white steed,
Most like a baron bold,
Rode foremost of his company,
Whose armour shone like gold.

"Show me," said he, "whose men you be
That hunt so boldly here,
That without my consent do chase
And kill my fallow deer."

The first man that did answer make
Was noble Percy he;
Who said, "We list not to declare,
Nor show whose men we be,

'Yet we will spend our dearest blood
Thy chiefest harts to slay."
Then Douglas swore a solemn oath,
And thus in rage did say:

"Ere thus I will outbravèd be,
One of us two shall die:
I know thee well, an earl thou art;
Lord Percy, so am I.

"But trust me, Percy, pity it were,
And great offence to kill
Any of these our guiltless men,
For they have done no ill.

"Let thou and I the battle try,
And set our men aside."
"Accurst be he," Earl Percy said.
"By whom this is denied."

Then stepped a gallant squire forth,
Witherington was his name,
Who said, "I would not have it told
To Henry our king for shame,

"That e'er my captain fought on foot,
And I stood looking on:
You be two earls," quoth Witherington,
"And I a squire alone:

"I'll do the best that do I may,
While I have power to stand:
While I have power to wield my sword,
I'll fight with heart and hand."

Our English archers bent their bows,
Their hearts were good and true;
At the first flight of arrows sent,
Full fourscore Scots they slew.

Yet bides Earl Douglas on the bent,
As chieftain stout and good;
As valiant captain, all unmoved
The shock he firmly stood.

His host he parted had in three,
As leader ware and tried,
And soon his spearmen on their foes
Bare down on every side.

Throughout the English archery
They dealt full many a wound;
But still our valiant Englishmen
All firmly kept their ground,

And throwing strait their bows away,
They grasped their sword so bright;
And now sharp blows, a heavy shower,
On shields and helmets light

They closed full fast on every side,
No slackness there was found;
And many a gallant gentleman
Lay gasping on the ground.

O Christ! it was a grief to see,
And likewise for to hear,
The cries of men lying in their gore,
And scattered here and there.

At last these two stout earls did meet,
Like captains of great might;
Like lions wode[1] they laid on load,
And made a cruel fight:

They fought until they both did sweat,
With swords of tempered steel,
Until the blood like drops of rain
They trickling down did feel.

"Yield thee, Lord Percy," Douglas said;
"In faith I will thee bring
Where thou shalt high advancèd be
By James our Scottish king:

"Thy ransom I will freely give,
And this report of thee,
Thou art the most courageous knight
That ever I did see."

"No, Douglas," quoth Earl Percy then,
"Thy proffer I do scorn;
I will not yield to any Scot
That ever yet was born."

[1] *Wode*, mad.

With that there came an arrow keen
Out of an English bow,
Which struck Earl Douglas to the heart,
A deep and deadly blow:

Who never spake more words than these
"Fight on, my merry men all;
For why, my life is at an end;
Lord Percy sees my fall."

Then leaving life, Earl Percy took
The dead man by the hand;
And said, "Earl Douglas, for thy life
Would I had lost my land!

"O Christ! my very heart doth bleed
With sorrow for thy sake,
For sure, a more redoubted knight
Mischance could never take."

A knight amongst the Scots there was,
Who saw Earl Douglas die,
Who straight in wrath did vow revenge
Upon the Lord Percy;

Sir Hugh Montgomery was he called,
Who, with a spear most bright,
Well mounted on a gallant steed,
Ran fiercely through the fight,

And past the English archers all,
Without all dread or fear,
And through Earl Percy's body then
He thrust his hateful spear.

With such a vehement force and might
He did his body gore,
The staff ran through the other side
A large cloth-yard and more.

So thus did both these nobles die,
Whose courage none could stain.
An English archer then perceived
The noble Earl was slain:

He had a bow bent in his hand,
Made of a trusty tree;
An arrow of a cloth-yard long
Up to the head drew he;

Against Sir Hugh Montgomery
So right the shaft he set,
The grey goose-wing that was thereon
In his heart's blood was wet.

This fight did last from break of day
Till setting of the sun;
For when they rang the evening bell
The battle scarce was done.

With stout Earl Percy, there was slain
Sir John of Egerton,
Sir Robert Ratcliff, and Sir John,
Sir James, that bold barón;

And with Sir George and stout Sir James,
Both knights of good account,
Good Sir Ralph Raby there was slain,
Whose prowess did surmount.

For Witherington needs must I wail,
As one in doleful dumps;
For when his legs were smitten off,
He fought upon his stumps.

And with Earl Douglas, there was slain
Sir Hugh Montgomery,
Sir Charles Murray, that from the field
One foot would never flee;

Sir Charles Murray of Ratcliff, too,
His sister's son was he;
Sir David Lamb, so well esteemed,
Yet saved he could not be;

And the Lord Maxwell in like case
Did with Earl Douglas die:
Of twenty hundred Scottish spears,
Scarce fifty-five did fly.

Of fifteen hundred Englishmen,
Went home but fifty-three;
The rest were slain in Chevy Chase,
Under the greenwood tree.

Next day did many widows come,
Their husbands to bewail;
They washed their wounds in brinish tears,
But all would not prevail;

Their bodies, bathed in purple gore,
They bore with them away;
They kissed them dead a thousand times,
Ere they were clad in clay.

The news was brought to Edenborough,
Where Scotland's king did reign,
That brave Earl Douglas suddenly
Was with an arrow slain.

"O heavy news!" King James did say,
"Scotland may witness be,
I have not any captain more
Of such account as he."

Like tidings to King Henry came,
Within as short a space,
That Percy of Northumberland
Was slain in Chevy Chase.

"Now God be with him!" said our king,
"Sith 'twill no better be;
I trust I have within my realm
Five hundred as good as he:

"Yet shall not Scots nor Scotland say
But I will vengeance take;
I'll be revengèd on them all,
For brave Earl Percy's sake."

This vow full well the king performed
After, at Humbledown;
In one day fifty knights were slain,
With lords of great renown,

And of the rest, of small account,
Did many thousands die.
Thus endeth the hunting of Chevy Chase,
Made by the Earl Percy.

God save our king, and bless this land
With plenty, joy, and peace;
And grant henceforth that foul debate
Twixt noblemen may cease!